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The Kutunhthokai Anthology

H. S. DAVID

In *Tamil Culture* (January 1955, pages 90 to 98), under the title "The Earliest Tamil Poems Extant", I have already shown that some stanzas or poems of the *Kutunhthokai* (குறுந்தொகை) are among the earliest Tamil poems extant. I shall now in a series of articles take up each of the Eight Anthologies (in Tamil எட்டுத் தொகை) and give the reader a short but critical appreciation thereof. I shall discuss in turn the authors, content and form of the poems themselves, the probable time of their origin and the manner of the compilation of the several poems into the present Anthology.

A. The Authors of the Several Stanzas

In the second edition (1947) of the *Kutunhthokai* Doctor U. V. Saminathaiyar and his son, S. Kaliyanasundaraiyar, list 206 poets as the authors of 391 poems of this work. The authors of the ten remaining poems are unknown. The reader who is interested in these 206 names should peruse their Introduction to the *Kutunhthokai*, pages 50 to 110, under the heading பாடினோர் வரலாறு. The list embraces such well-known names as Ammu:vana:r, Auvaiya:r, Kapilar, Ko:pperunjco:lar, Ko:vu:r Kil-a:r, Nakki:rana:r, Paran:ar, Pa:lai Pa:t:iya Perungkat:ungko:, Ma:ngkut:i Kil-a:r Maruthana:r, also known as the Singer of Ka:njci songs, from Mathurai, Maruthan Il:a Nha:kana:r, also from Mathurai, Ma:mu:lana:r, Mo:ci Ki:rana:r and the famous Vel:l:i Vi:thiya:r, who is mentioned frequently in both the *Kutunhthokai* and *Akanha:nu:tu* (அகநானூறு) But what is most interesting from a critical angle is the number of poets whose names are made up for the occasion, from some striking phrase or

simile in the poems composed by them. I list 20 below: the majority of these poets have no other name than the one fashioned in this manner.

LIST I.

Name of the poet in Roman and in Tamil letters	Reference in the *Kutunh-thokai*	The relevant passage which contains very striking similes or significant phrases
An:ila:t:u Muntila: r அணிலாடு முன்றிலார்	41:4-6 (1)	மக்கள் போகிய அணிலாடு முன்றில் புலப்பில் போலப் புல்லென்று அலப்பென், தோழி, அவர் அகன்ற ஞான்றே.
Eyittiyana:r எயிற்றியனார்	286:1-2 (2)	உள்ளிக் காண்பென் போல்வல் முள் எயிற்று அமிழ்தம் ஊறும்அஞ் செவ்வாய்.
O:ritpicaiya:r ஓரிற்பிச்சையார்	277:2-3 (3)	செந்நெல் அமலை வெண்மை வெள் இழுது ஓரிற்பிச்சை ஆர மாந்தி.
O:re:rul-avana:r ஓரேருழவனார்	131:3-6 (4)	ஈரம் பட்ட செவ்விப் பைம்புனத்து ஓரேர் உழவன் போலப் பெருவிதுப்பு உற்றன்றால் நோகோ யானே!
Kangkul vel:l:aththa:r கங்குல் வெள்ளத் தார்	387:3-5 (5)	உயிர்வரம்பு ஆக நீந்தினம் ஆயின், எவன்கொல் வாழி? தோழி! கங்குல் வெள்ளம் கடலினும் பெரிதே!
Kayamana:r கயமனார்	9:4-6 (6)	பாசடை நிவந்த கணைக்கால் நெய்தல் இளமீன் இருங்கழி ஓதமல்குதொறும் கயம்மூழ்கு மகளிர் கண்ணின் மானும்.
Kalporucitu nuraiya:r கல்பொருசிறு நுரையார்	290:5-6 (7)	கல்பொரு சிறுநுரை போல, மெல்ல மெல்ல இல்லாகுதுமே!
Kavaimakana:r கவைமகனார்	324:6-7 (8)	கவைமக நஞ்சுண்டாங்கு அஞ்சுவல், பெரும, என் நெஞ்சத் தானே!

Name of the poet in Roman and in Tamil letters	Reference in the *Kutunh-thokai*	The relevant passage which contains very striking similes or significant phrases
Ka:kkaipa:t:ini ya:r காக்கைபாடினி யார் = the poetess who has sung well of the crow	210:3-6 (9)	முழுதுடன் விளைந்த வெண்நெல் வெஞ்சோறு எழுகலத்து ஏந்தினும், சிறிதென் தோழி, பெருந்தோள் நெகிழ்த்த செல்லற்கு விருந்துவரக் கரைந்த காக்கையது பலியே!
Ka:letikat:ikai ya:r காலெறிகடிகை யார்	267:2-4 (10)	காலெறி கடிகைக் கண் அயின்று அன்ன கரும்பின் வாலெயிறு ஊறிய வசையில் தீநீர்.
Kuppaikko:l-iya:r குப்பைக்கோழி யார்	305:6 8 (11)	குப்பைக் கோழித் தனிப்போர் போல விளிவாங்கு விளியின் அல்லது களைவோர் இலை யான் உற்ற நோயே!
Kutiyitaiya:r குறிஇறையார்	394:1-3 (12)	முழந்தாள் இரும்பிடிக் கயந்தலைக் குழவி குறிஇறைப் புதல்வரொடு மறுவந்து ஓடி
Ko:ve:ngkai perungkathal-var கோவேங்கைப் பெருங்கதழ்வர்	134:3-5 (13)	குறும்பொறைத் தடைஇய நெடுந் தாள் வேங்கைப் பூவுடை அலங்குசினை புலம்பத் தாக்கிக் கல்பொருது இரங்கும் கதழ்வீழ் அருவி
Thumpice:r ki:rana:r தும்பிசேர்கீரனார்	392:1 (14)	அம்ம, வாழியோ, அணிச்சிறைத் தும்பி! Cf. the commentary hereon, op. cit. p. 768.
Nhet:uven:nhila vina:r நெடுவெண்நில வினார்	47:3-4 (15)	எல்லி வருநர் களவிற்கு நல்லை அல்லை, நெடுவெண் நிலவே!
Pathat:ivaıkala:r பதடிவைகலார்	323:1 (16)	எல்லாம் எவனோ? பதடி வைகல்! (=பதர்) Cf. "Vanity of vanities: all is vanity," the Bible.

Name of the poet in Roman and in Tamil letters	Reference in the *Kutunh-thokai*	The relevant passage which contains very striking similes or significant phrases
Mat:alpa:t:iyama: thangki:rana:r மடல் பாடிய மாதங்கீரனர்	182:1 (17)	விழுத்தலைப் பெண்ணை விளையல் மாமடல். Cf. the commentary, op. cit. p. 389, the last para.
Mi:netithu:n:t:i la:r மீனெறி தூண்டி லார்	54:3-4 (18)	கான யானை கைவிடு பசுங்கழை மீனெறி தூண்டிலின் நிவக்கும் (=rising).
Vit:t:akuthirai-ya:r விட்ட குதிரை யார்	74:1-2 (19)	விட்ட குதிரை விசைப்பின் அன்ன விசும்புதோய் பசுங்கழைக் குன்ற நாடன்.
Villakaviralina:r வில்லக விரலினர்	370:4-5 (20)	வில்லக விரலிற் பொருந்தி, அவன் நல்லகஞ் சேரின் ஒருமருங் கினமே !

The last simile was so graphic and so apt that it was copied in later literature, as at *Ci:vaka cinhtha:man:i* 2110 a: (சீவக சிந்தாமணி) வில்லக விரல்போற் பொருந்தி.

Two remarks must be made in connexion with these authors of the poems in the *Kutunhthokai*. *First,* four of these same poets are mentioned as the authors of poems in the other Anthologies and there they are called by the names, fashioned in the manner described above from words or phrases occurring in the *Kutunhthokai.* Thus, O:re:rul-avana:r is mentioned as the author of *Putanha:-nu:tu* (புறநானூறு) 193 ; Kayamana:r is the author not only of *Kutunhthokai*, 9, 356, 378 and 396 but also of *Putanha:nu:tu* 254, of *Nhattin:ai,* (நற்றிணை) 12, 198, 279, 293, 305 and 324 as well as of *Akanha:nu:tu,* 145, 195, 259 and of nine other poems in that Anthology. Likewise, the poetess Ka:kkaipa:t:iniya:r Nhaccel:l:aiya:r composed not only *Kutunhthokai,* 210 but also the ten stanzas, 51 to 60, in *Pathittuppaṭhthu* (பதிற்றுப்பத்து) as line 13 of the concluding (பதிகம்) Pathikam expressly states. That she

was a poetess, not a poet, is clear not only from the termination "ini" in "pa:t:ini" = pa:t:upaval: = she who sings, but also from the proper name cel:l:ai, contained in Nhaccel:l:aiya:r. Thus at the ninth Pathikam of *Pathittuppathثhu* from line 2 வேண்மாள் அந்துவஞ் செள்ளை ஈன்ற மகன் (= the son she bore), it is clear that cel:l:ai is the name of a female. The initial syllable "nha" in her name, as in Nha-kki:rar, where ki:r is most probably conn.w.Sk. gir=praise, verse, song, seems to be a corruption of Nhal= good, splendid, and is classified by U. V. Saminathaiyar, op. cit. p. 72 of the Introduction, as a particle connoting "splendour" 'ந' என்பது சிறப்புப் பொருளைத் தருவதோர் இடைச்சொல். Likewise, the poet Thumpice:r Ki:rana:r composed not only *Kutunhthokai,* 61, 316, 320 and 392 but also *Nhattin:ai,* 277 and *Putanha:nu:tu,* 249. It must be made clear to the student of Tamil that the final "a:r", in such names as the above, is optional and a mere honorific termination.

B. THE TIME OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE *Kutunhthokai* AND OF ITS COMPILATION

I have now made it quite clear that in a number of instances the names of the authors were fashioned out of the words or phrases found in the *Kutunhthokai* poems themselves and that these names were used to designate the authors of the poems found in four of the other Anthologies, namely, *Nhattin:ai, Akanha:nu:tu, Putanha:nu:tu* and *Pathittuppaththu.* The second point is more remarkable still. There is no instance of the "vice versa" phenomenon. There are instances, it is true, of *similar* names fashioned out of words or phrases found in the poems of the other Anthologies. Thus *Nhattin:ai,* 284:10 runs தேய்புரிப் பழங்கயிறு போல. The phrase was so apt and graphic that the unknown author was forthwith named தேய்புரிப் பழங்கயிற்றினார். But no author of the *Kutunhthokai* poems is known by this name or by any other name fashioned in this manner in the other Anthologies. From

these two points it is clear that the *Kutunhthokai* was the first of the eight anthologies to be *compiled,* in other words the earliest Tamil literary work extant, if we exclude Tamil grammars, like the *Tholka:ppiam* (தொல் காப்பியம்)from our present consideration, except for three of the Sūtras taken from its earliest part, *Elu-uththathika:-ram,* 62, 64 and 65.

Sutra 62: சகரக் கிளவியும் அவற்றோர் அற்றே
அ ஐ ஔஎனும் மூன்றலங் கடையே.

,, 64: ஆ எ ஒ
என்னும் மூவுயிர் ஞகாரத்து உரிய.

,, 65: ஆவோடு அல்லது யகரம் முதலாது.

These three sūtras are of the utmost importance in our task of fixing the relative antiquity of the early Tamil classics among themselves and in relation to *Tholka:ppiam Elu-uththathika:ram* (தொல் :எழுத்ததிகாரம்). The early mediaeval Tamil grammars, like the வீரசோழியம், நன்னூல் and நேமிநாதம், make no such distinction as *Tholka:p-piam Elu-uththathika:ram* 62 between " c " and the other " el-uththu " (k, th, nh, p, m) mentioned in the previous sūtra (61) of *Tholka:ppiam.* It seems therefore likely that *Tholka:ppiam Elu-uththathika:ram* is here dealing with a peculiar feature in the Tamil of its own time. On analysing the words, found in the early classics, with " ca " as the initial syllable, I find that the *Kutunhthokai* has the least number of these words whereas the *Paripa:t:al* (பரிபாடல்) has the greatest, with the *Paththuppa:t:t:u* (பத்துப்பாட்டு) or the Ten Idylls in an intermediate position. Thus the *Kutunhthokai* has only one word with " ca " as the initial syllable, cakat:am, at 165:3. The *Paripa:t:al,* however, which is generally considered to be the last (in time) of the Eight Anthologies, has the following words with " ca " as the initial syllable thereof :—

LIST II

The word with "ca" as initial in Tamil letters.	The word in Roman letters.	Its meaning in English.	The References in *Paripa:t:al*
1. சகடம்	cakat:am	a cart	10:17
2. சங்கம்	cangkam	a large number	2:13
3. சடை	cat:ai	thick tangled hair	9:5; 11:12
4. சண்பகம்	can:pakam	a flowering tree, bearing a yellow fragrant flower, " Michelia Campaka "	12:77
5. சமம்	camam	a battle, Com. po:r	19:42; 21:2; 22-1
6. சமழ்	camal-	{ = be put to shame, worsted	20:36
7. சமை	camai	= take an embryo into the womb and bring it to maturity	5:39
8. சலம்[1]	calam[1]	= water	9:6; 10:90
9. சலம்[2]	calam[2]	deception, as a result of an unsteady character	6:57
10. சலம்[3]	calam[3]	malice, contrariety	15:58
11. சனம்	canam	people, fr, ck. jana	10:59

LIST III

The word with "ca" initial.	References in the other 6 Anthologies, excluding *Kutunhthokai*, * *Paripa:t:al*	References in the Ten Idylls.	References in *Ci:vaka chinta:-man:i, Cilap-pathika:ram, Nha:lat:iya:r, Man:ime:kalai*
1. cakat : am or cakat:u	*Nhattin:ai* 4:9 *Akanha:nu:tu* 136:5 *Putanha:nu:tu* 102:2	*Perumpa:n:a:ttup-pat:ai* (பெரும்பாணாற் றுப்படை) 50	*Nha:lat:iya:r* (நாலடியார்) 2d *Cilappathika:ram* (சிலப் பதிகாரம்) 1:50; 26:136 *Ci:vakacinhtha:-man:i* (சீவக சிந்தாமணி) 363 b
2. cat:ai	*Putanha:nu:tu* 1:13; 43:4; 166:1; 251:7; 252:2 *Kaliththokai* (கலித்தொகை) 150:9;		*Ci:vakacinhtha:-mani*: 32c; 1431a *Cilappathika:-ram* 40; 26:225 *Man:ime:kalai* (மணிமேகலை) 17:27
3. can:pu*		*Perumpa:n:a:ttup-pat:ai* 220 *Mathuraikka:nji* (மதுரைக் காஞ்சி) 172 *Malaipat:u-kat:a:m* (மலைபடுகடாம்) 454	
4. cathukkam	*Nhattin:ai* 319:5	*Muruka:ttup-pat:ai* (திருமுருகாற் றுப்படை) 225	*Cilappathika:-ram* 5:134; 14:213 *Man:ime:kalai* 1.55; 7:78; 20:29; 22:55 *Ci:vakacinhtha:-man:i* 112b

*can:pu = sedge-grass, elephant grass.

The word with "ca" initial	*References in the other 6 Anthologies excluding *Kutunhthokai* * *Paripa:t:al*	References in the Ten Idylls	References in *Ci:vaka cinhtha:man:i, Cilappathika:ram, Nha:lat:iya:r, Man:ime:kalai*
5. canhthi*		*Muruka:ttuppat:ai* 225	*Cilappathika:ram* 10:19 *Man:ime:kalai* 6:61
6. canhthu[1]		*Malaipat:ukat:a:m* 393	
7. canhthu[2]	*Akanha:nu:tu* 102:3		*Cilappathika:ram* 8:19
8. caman	*Akanha:nu:tu* 188:5; 220:4; 25:19 *Putanha:nu:tu* 14:4; 72:8; 275:9; 284:5; 309:2; 365:5 *Pathittuppaththu* (பதிற்றுபத்து) 30:41; 34:10; 40:10, 41:19; 43:9; 52:7; 70:3; 71:20; 76:1	*Mathuraikka:nji* 593 *Muruka:ttuppat:ai* 99	*Cilappathika:ram* 10:247 *Man:ime:kalai* 8:59

canhthi = a junction of streets.
canhthu[1] = a junction of streets.
canhthu[2] = the sandal-wood unguent and perfume, Sirium myrtifolium.

The Eight Anthologies and the Ten Idylls are known in Tamil as the *Me:l Kan:akku* (மேல் கணக்கு) I shall here call them the 18 major classics of antiquity. It will be observed that among these the *Kutunhthokai* is nearest to the complete observance of the rule enunciated at *Thol-ka:ppiam Elu-ththathika:ram*, 62: it has only one word with "ca-" as initial and that only once. On the other hand, the *Paripa:t:al* has eleven such words, occurring

fifteen times in all. In size or length the two works are almost equal. Hence we are justified in stating that (1) the *Kutunhthokai* is a much earlier work than the *Paripa:t:al,* a conclusion we arrive at on other counts as well ; (2) with the flow of time the words with the "ca-" initial became more and more numerous. This conclusion is strengthened by a glance at the multitude of words with this initial to be found in the early mediaeval work, the *Thiruva:cakam* (திருவாசகம்) :—cakam, cakalam, cangkam, cangku, cangkamam, cangkaran, caccaiyan, cat:ai, cat:t:am, cat:t:u, can:t:am, cathurpat:a, cathurar, cathuran, cathurapperuma:n, cathurmukan, caththi, canhthanam, canhthu, canhthiran, camayam, camayava:thi, cayacaya = hurrah ! ; cayam[1] = victory ; cayam[2] = destruction ; carat:u, caran:, caranam, caratham, cari ; calam[1] = water ; calam[2] = malice ; calanhtharan, cali, calippu, cavalai, cal-akku. Furthermore, *Tholka:ppiam Elu-ththathika:ram* 62 bans likewise the "cai-" initial for Tamil words : but the *Tiruva:cakam* has the word "caivan" at 2 : 85 ; 4 : 113 ; 40:35.

Let us now turn to *Tholka:ppiam Elu-ththathika:ram* 64. It states : "The letter nj, as the initial of a word, can be followed by only three vowels :—a:, e and o". This rule differs greatly from the parallel statements in early mediaeval grammars like the *Viraco:l-iyam* and the *Nhannu:l* (நன்னூல்). The former at *Elu-ththathika:ram* Canthi. 7b states : nja nha:nku (ஞ நான்கு) i.e. nj is followed by four of the vowels. Its Comm. specifies these four as a, a:, e and o. The latter at 105 states : a, a:, e ovvo:t:ru a:kum njammuthal.

Thus between the composition of *Tholka:ppiam Eluththathika:ram* and that of these early mediaeval grammars, there had come into use Tamil words with "nja" as their initial syllable (*Nhannu:l* 105) as well as words with "ca" as initial (*Nhannu:l* 102). We have seen above that the *Kutunhthokai* stands out as the best observer of *Tholka:ppiam Elu-ththathika:ram* 62. We are happy to state

that it is the best observer of *Tholka:ppiam Elu-ththathika:ram* 64 as well. It has only one instance of the "nja" initial, viz. njamali = a dog, at 179:2. We are therefore justified in ascribing an early date not only to the compilation of the *Kutunhthokai* but also to the *composition* of a vast majority of its poems. As we pass along to the later texts, even among the 18 major classics, both the number of such words and their incidence increase *pari passu*. In addition, there is the "nji" initial in "njimitu", which also violates *Tholka:ppiam Elu-ththathika:ram* 64. This increase is exactly parallel to that associated with the "ca-" initial under *Tholka:ppiam Elu-ththathika:ram* 62 above. I subjoin here a list of words in the other 17 major classics that have "nja" or "nji" as the initial syllable, in violation of the rule aforementioned :—

LIST IV

1. njamali = a hunting dog, *Akanah:nu:tu* 122:9 ; 388:14. *Putanha:nu:tu* 74:3 ; *Perumpa:n:a:ttuppat:ai* 112, 132, 299 ; *Pat:t:inappa:lai* (பட்டினப்பாலை) 140 ; *Kutinjippa:t:u* (குறிஞ்சிப்பாட்டு) 131.
2. njamann or njaman = the god of Death, Yama, *Putanha:nu:tu* 6:9 தெறிகோல் ஞமன் போல; *Paripa:ta:l* 3:21 ; 5:61.
3. njaral = a loud sound or noise, to sound loud, *Pathittuppaththu* 30:6 ; *Muruka:ttuppat:ai* 120.
4. njin:am = fat (substantive), *Putanha:nu:tu* 177:14.
5. njimitu = the honey-bee or beetle, *Akanha:nu:tu* 59:9 ; 78:3 ; 192:10 ; *Putanha:nu:tu* 93:12 ; *Kaliththokai* 127:3 ; *Pathittuppaththu* 12:12 ; 50:18.

Let us now pass on to the last of the three Sūtras, namely *Tholka:ppiam Elu-ththathika:ram* 65, which runs :—

a:vo:t:u allathu yakaram muthal-a:thu. This means : "y can be the initial of a word, only when y is

followed by a:". As usual, the *Kutunhthokai* observes this regulation best : it conforms thereto perfectly, avoiding the "ya-", "yu : " and "yo : " initials that are found in other works, even in the 17 other major classics of antiquity. In these the following words violate this rule :—

1. yavanar = the Greeks or Ionians, *Putanha:nu:tu* 56:18 ; அருகாது ஈயா யவனர், *Pathittuppaththu* Pathikam 2, line 8 ; *Nhet:unhalva:t:ai* (நெடுநல் வாடை) 101 ; *Perumpa:n:a:ttuppat:ai* 316 ; யவனர் ஓதிம விளக்கின்; *Mullaippa:t:u* (முல்லைப் பாட்டு) 61.
2. yu:kam = a black monkey, *Muruka:ttuppat:ai* 302.
3. yu:pam = a high sacrificial pillar = ve:l: vi-ththu:n: வேள்வித்தூண் in the Comm. and at *Putanha:nu:tu* 400:19. The word யூபம் itself occurs at *Putanha:nu:tu* 15:21 ; 224:8 ; *Pathittuppaththu* 67:10, in the above-mentioned sense. At *Mathuraikka:nji* 27 யூபம் means " the headless trunk of a corpse ". Evidently this meaning arose by analogy.

Accordingly we may state that in the gradual evolution of Tamil, the palatals "c", "nj" and "y" came to be associated with more and more of the vowels. *Elu-ththathika:ram* 62, 64 and 65 of *Tholka:ppiam* can refer only to the earliest stratum of the extant Tamil literature that is represented by 399 out of the 401 poems of the *Kutunhthokai.* On this test alone, poems 165 and 179 therein should be considered as of a slightly later date than the vast majority of its poems, which (on other grounds as well) we must ascribe to the centuries before and immediately after the birth of Christ. See my above-mentioned article : " The Earliest Tamil Poems Extant."

C. Form and Content of these Poems : the Metre.

In the earliest Tamil poetry the easier metres, like a:ciriyam or akaval and vanjci were the only ones employed : in later texts we encounter more difficult and elaborate ones. In the 18 major classics we meet only four. This

is explicitly stated at *Tholka:ppiam Porul:athika:ram* 417, which, however, substitutes ven:pa: for paripa:t:al—the metre, not the work. A:ciriyam vanjci ven:pa: kkali ena

Nha:l iyattu enpa pa:vakai viriye: In the *Thiruva:-cakam,* Pope finds fourteen varieties of metre. The occurrence of a variety of metres in any work, e.g. in *Ci:vaka-cinhtha:man:i* stamps it at once as (to that extent) late in composition. The *Kutunhthokai* has only one metre throughout, the akaval.

Except for poems 307 and 391, which contain nine lines, the stanzas of the *Kutunhthokai* range between five and eight lines in size. Each of these lines contains four சீர். but in most of these stanzas, if not in all, the penultimate line contains only three சீர். This last phenomenon occurs likewise in the stanzas of *Nhattin:ai* and *Akanha:-nu:tu.*

The earliest poems in Tamil are short. Unlike mediaeval Tamil poetry, they indulge in no fantastic comparisons, no fanciful numbers, no improbable "incidents" or so-called "events", no nauseating details. They are like cameos. The poets concerned create vivid pen-pictures in our minds with a few deft strokes of the poetic brush. The poems are distinguished by freshness, naivete and the minimum of conscious embellishment. In them is realized the truth of the dictum : "Art lies in concealing art". Pre-eminent among these early poems stand the short stanzas of the *Kutunhthokai.* Each of its stanzas, short though it be, is a complete poem. It is doubtful whether any short stanzas in English, French, Italian or Latin have realized such perfect poems as those of the *Kutunhthokai* in Tamil, if we were to judge them by the vividness of their sentiments and the consummate manner of their expression in such few words. In conciseness they vie with Tacitus, in depth with Milton's sonnets, in the force of sentiment with Shakespeare's, in felicity of expression with Wordsworth's.

Let us take as an example its 130th stanza : it contains four sentences within its five lines.

நிலம் தொட்டுப் புகாஅர் ; வானம் ஏறார் ;
விலங்குஇரு முந்நீர் காலின் செல்லார் ;
நாட்டின் நாட்டின் ஊரின் ஊரின்
குடிமுறை குடிமுறை தேரின்,
கெடுநரும் உளரோ ? நம்காதலோரே.

nhilanh thot:t:u	ppukar.	va: nam	e:ta:r.
vilangku iru	munhnhi:r	ka:lit	cella:r.
nha:t:t: in	nha:t:t:in	u:rin	u:rin
kut:imutai	kut:imutai	te:rin,	
ket:unharum	ul:aro:	nhang ka:thal - o:re:	

The husband of the family has been away for a long time, probably on a business trip : the wife languishes at home, pining for his return. Her female companion consoles her by these reassuring short pithy sentences : " It is quite improbable that he has dug into the earth and entered therein. Assuredly he has not ascended into heaven. He has not crossed the ocean (that lies) athwart, *on foot.* If we were to search for him, country by country, village by village, house by house, could your beloved escape us ? " It is difficult to find in Tamil literature *a stanza* to surpass this one, in the points afore-mentioned. Like the Rigvedic *grihe: grihe:* or *dame: dame:*, there are suitable *repetitions*, in lines 3 and 4 of this poem. Likewise at *Kutunhthokai* 399:3 thot:u ul-i thot:u ul-i; 399:4 vit:u ul-i vit:u ul-i. At times these seem to be slightly overdone, as at *Kutunhthokai* 285:1-2 :—vaikal vaikal vaikavum, va:ra:r. ella: ellai ellaiyum to:nta:r.

But there are no fantastic repetitions in the *Kutunhthokai* as are to be found in *Nha:lat:iya:r,* as for instance, in stanza 39 : vaikalum vaikal varakkan:t:um axthe un:ara:r

வெந்திறல் கடுவளி பொங்கர்ப் போந்தென,
நெற்றுவிளை உழிஞ்சில்வற்றல் ஆர்க்கும்
மலையுடை, அருஞ்சுரம் என்ப நம்
முலையிடை முனிநர் சென்ற ஆறே.

vaikalai	vaikalai	vaikumentu	inputuvar.
vaikalum	vaikattam	va:l-nha:l:me:l	vaikuthal
vaikalum	vaiththun:ar — a:tha:r.		

Except for such ven:pa: stanzas as the above, the later poems are much longer than the earlier ones. The growth in size is accompanied by a growth in conscious adornment, called " an:i " or " alangka:ram ". Not that these poetic devices are totally absent in the earliest poems. Thus " *ethukai* " on set purpose occurs fairly frequently in the *Kutunhthokai* as, for instance. in lines 6 and 7 of its 374th stanza : In line 6, the first ci:r is நீடிரும், and corresponding to it, in line 7, the first ci:r is கூடிறும். Note "t:i" as the second syllable in each line. But it is worthy of note that none of the remaining five lines shows the slightest trace of any " ethukai ". Similarly, " *mo:nai* " occurs frequently in the *Kutunhthokai*. There are instances even of complete " mo:nai ", பூரணமுகனை or மோனை, where all the " ci:r " in a line begin with the same or kindred consonant. Thus *Kutunhthokai* 41:5 (containing 3 ci:r only) runs

புலப்பில் போலப் புல்லென்று.

182:1. விழுத்தலைப் பெண்ணை விளையல் மாமடல்

,, 2. மணியணி பெருந்தார் மரபிற் பூட்டி.

391:2. புகரி புழுங்கிய புயல்நீங்கு புறவில்.

The last-mentioned is the best example of perfect " mo:nai ". But the instances of " mo:nai " are not excessive, as in later literature, where they number 70 to 75 per cent of the " ci:r " involved. In *Kutunhthokai* 41, they number only 12 out of its 23 " ci:r " ; in stanza 182, only 12 " mo:nai " are encountered out of a possible 27, although the first two lines have four each ; in stanza 391, which consists of nine lines and therefore of 35 " ci:r ", only 17 " mo:nai " are to be found. Thus " an:i " is kept within reasonable bounds : it never becomes in the *Kutunhthokai* the chief object of the poet, as it does in *later* literature to the extent that at times his poem appears too laboured and involved. Let the reader recall to mind the *Nha:lat:iya:r* stanza just cited, stanza 39.

D. The Reticence and Charm of the *Kutunhthokai*

The earlier poems of classical aniquity, like the stanzas of the *Kutunhthokai* and *Nhattin:ai*, describe the situation e.g. the lovers' meeting or parting, in a few well-chosen words. They suggest rather than describe certain details connected with such situations. There is no attempt in them at a complete description of every limb of the heroine or of any other girl of the poet's choice, as we find in some of the Ten Idylls. For instance, *Porunhara:ttuppat:ai* (பொருநராற்றுப்படை) lines 35-40 describe in detail these limbs of the heroine in question : her vana mulai, koppu:l-, alkul, kutangku. In *Ci:vaka cinhtha:man:i* the high-water mark of such descriptions is reached. In the words of Pope, *Nha:lat:iya:r* Introduction, p. 43, "the poet carefully photographs everything, using words and giving details" that were better left out. No such grossness is to be encountered in the *Kutunhthokai.* On the contrary, the sexual intercourse between the lover and his beloved is glided over under the innocent term : "laughter", in Tamil நகுதல் =nhakuthal, as at *Kutunhthokai* 169:3 ; 226: 7 ; 320:5. *Kutunhthokai* 394:6 has instead நகை விளையாட்டு Cf. *Kutunhthokai* 381:7 ilangku eyitu tho:nta nhakkathan payan e *Kutunhthokai* 384:3 has a variant : nhalan un:u, which is also found at *Kutunhthokai* 112:5 ; 236:6 and at *Nhattin:ai* 15:4 (nhalam). Likewise at *Nhattin:ai* 135:9 ; 187:10 ; 299:9 ; *Akanha:nu:tu* 103:13-14 தம்மொடு தானே சென்ற நலனும், the same complaint is made about the heroine having lost her virginal chastity at the hands of her lover. The poems of this nature are stamped with a deep pathos, which breathes out of every syllable of the short pithy sentences in which this sentiment of heartfelt grief at her abandonment by her new-found lover is conveyed.

I cite here a few sentences from the *Kutunhthokai* :—

எனநலன்.........கானக நாடனொடு ஒழிந்தன்றே

54: 1-5 en nhalan......ka:naka nha:t:anot:u ol-inhthante:

யானே ஈண்டையேனே என்நலனே
ஆனா நோயொடு கானலஃதே

97: 1-2 ya:ne: i'n:t:aiye:ne:. en nhalane:
a:na: nho:yot:u ka:nalaxthe:

விழவு மேம்பட்ட என்நலனே
தண்ணம் துறைவனொடு கண்மாறின்றே

125: 4-7 vil-avu me:mpat:t:a en nhalane:
than:n.anh thutaivanot:u kan:ma:tintc:

நலம் புதிது உண்ட புலம்பினானே

133: 5 nhalam puthithu un:t:a pulampina: ne:

In his Comm. on the *Kutunhthokai* U. V. Saminathaiyar explains the above-mentioned term "nhakutal" as "al:av-al:a:vuthal" i.e. sexual intercourse. He elucidates this still further in these words : இஃது இடக்கர் அடக்கிக் கூறியது. Cf. op. cit. p. 477, 750, 771. At *Kutunhthokai* 399:3 he explains "thot:uthal" in the same way. இடக்கர் அடக்கல் means avoiding indecent terms or vulgar language, euphemism.

In connexion with the incidents referred to above, namely the meeting of the lovers, their cherished union and subsequent parting, a variety of apt similes abounds in the *Kutunhthokai.* Stanza 399, a complete poem in just four lines, will serve to illustrate one such simile.

ஊருண் கேணி உண்துறைத் தொக்க
பாசி அற்றே பசலை, காதலர்
தொடுவுழித் தொடுவுழி நீங்கி,
விடுவுழி விடுவுழிப் பரத்த லானே.

Whether this is the truth or a mere poetic convention, the poets of the Love Poems in *Kutunhthokai, Nhattin:ai, Akanah:nu:tu* and *Aingkutunhutu* (ஐங்குறுநூறு) speak of a certain sallowness or paleness of complexion from love-sickness on the part of the heroine. *Akanah:nu:tu* 156:17 explains it as மணிமருள் மேனி பொன்நிறம் கொளலே.

They term it pacalai, which M. L., at p. 2396, explains thus: காமநோயால் உண்டாம் நிற வேறுபாடு Let us return to *Kutunhthokai* 399. This sallowness is compared to the moss on the surface of the village-well or tank. When her beloved is beside her and she can be intimately united with him, her sallowness shrinks, just as the moss shrinks when people draw water out of the well. On the other hand, when her beloved withdraws from her, her sallowness spreads, just as the moss spreads, when all the villagers withdraw from their well, as, for instance, at night.

E. The Clothing of Women in the *Kutunhthokai*

The earliest poems of Tamil classical antiquity reveal a stage of material culture that is rather primitive in certain respects. when it is compared with the advanced stage of civilization that we notice in later Tamil poems like *Cilappathika:ram*, *Man:ime:kalai* and *Ci:vaka cinhtha:man:i*. Take dress, for instance. In several poems of the *Kutunhthokai* the dress of the heroine is described as consisting of nothing more than the leaves of certain trees, like the a:mpal or the ceyalai, the Asoka tree. At *Kutunhthokai* 214:4-5 thirunhthil-ai alkutkup perunhthal-ai uthavic ceyalai mulu-muthal ol-iya, there is no doubt about this fact. *It is no mere poetical convention.* Let any one who doubts this read and ponder over *Kutunhthokai* 294:5-7.

துத்திப்பரந்தள் பைத்தகல் அல்குல்
திருந்திழை துயல்வுக்கோட் டசைத்த பசுங்குழைத்
தழையினும் உழையிற் போகான்.

The poet describes these leaves as still fresh and green round the heroine's waist. There are several more references to this primitive dress in the *Kutunhthokai* e.g. 125:3; 159:1 ; 223:4 muti=tal-ai, Comm. ; 293:5-6 ; 295:2 ; 333:3 ; 342:5 ; 345:4. The *Nhattin:ai* and *Akanah:nu:tu* which approach closest to the time of the composition of the *Kutunhthokai* stanzas, both contain quite a few references of the

same nature, the former at 96:7-8 ; 170:2-3 ; the latter at 7: 2 ; 59:5 ; 156:9-10 ; 176:13-14 ; 188:12 ; 189:8 ; 226:3 ; 259:2. Let the reader contrast with this primitive dress the garments of rich cloth, woven out of exquisite thread, called " kalingkam ", " thukil " or " atuvai ", worn by the members of the fair sex of a slightly later time. As time goes on, this cloth becomes more and more prominent. In the *Kutunhthokai* there is no mention of either " atuvai " or " thukil " ; and " kalingkam " is mentioned only once, at 167:2, which states : kal-uvutu kalingkam kal-a:athu ut:i:i. *Nhattin:ai* has more than one reference thereto, namely at 20:4 துளங்கியல் அசைவரக் கலிங்கம் துயல்வர ; பூங்கலிங்கம் and at 380:2 கலிங்கம். Likewise, " atuvai " occurs at least twice in *Nhattin:ai,* namely at 40:5

வெறியுற விரிந்த அறுவை and at 70:2

துறைபோகு அறுவைத் தூமடி அன்ன.

Akanah:nu:tu has likewise at least five references thereto, namely at 86:21-23 ; 124 in the title of the author of the poem ; 136:20 ; 198:6 ; 236:11 (pat:t:u=silk). *Pathittup-paththu,* although dealing with war, not with love and therefore, like Virgil's *Aenid,* singing more of arms and the man[1] than of women and their clothes, has nevertheless several references to this exquisite garment of women, e.g. at 12:21

நூலாக் கலிங்கம் வாலரைக் கொளீஇ ;

and again at 76:13

கழுபுறு கலிங்கம் கடுப்பச் சூடி ;

and as " atuvai " at 34:3

இருநிலம் தோயும் விரிநூல் அறுவையர்.

Other references in the major classics thereto are :

Kaliththokai 65:4 ; 142:26 ;

Porunhara:ttuppat:ai 82-83 ; *Nhet:unhalva:t:ai* 35, 145-7 (pu:nhthukil) ;

Malaipat:ukat:a:m 561 (Nhul-ai nhu:l kalingkam).

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1 " arma virumque cano ".

In the next section I shall give more instances of the rich clothes worn by men and women of later times than this. Let a few references suffice here.

(a) *Man:ime:kalai* 28:52-53 gives an elaborate description of this "atuvai":—

> கண்ணுழை கல்லா நுண்ணூற் கைவினை
> வண்ண அறுவையர்.

This passage describes the weavers of this coloured and delicately-woven cloth.

(b) *Cilappathika:ram* 14:205-7 describes the cloth shops of drapers as covering both sides of a street in Mathurai. Piles of the most exquisitely-worked cloth of both cotton and wool as well as of silk are to be found in these shops :

> நூலினும் மயிரினும் நுழைநூற் பட்டினும்
> பால்வகை தெரியாப் பல்நூறு அடுக்கத்து
> நறுமடி செறிந்த அறுவை வீதியும்.

What a far cry is this wealth of drapery from that stage of leaf-garments which is described in the vast majority of the *Kutunhthokai* poems!

F. Cotton, Cloth and Dress in the *Kutunhthokai* Contrasted with those of a later Epoch.

It will be interesting for us to know what types of clothes were used by men and women of those early times. As usual, the *Kutunhthokai* with but one exception, speaks only of the coarse cotton cloth that *a priori* would have come into use in the earliest times. It terms it "thick cloth": "paru:uth thiri" at 330:4; but at 353:5 the word "thiri" means a wick, not cloth, so that "panjci ven: thiri" comes to mean "the cotton-wick of a lamp." That cotton was then cultivated is evident from 72:4 of the same work, where cotton is called "pari:i," instead of "parutti": பரிஇ வித்திய ஏனல், i.e. "the millet-field, wherein

cotton was sown". There is only one other reference to cotton in the whole of the *Kutunhthokai* and that refers to cotton-fibre, used as cords, viz. at 293:2. From the paucity of these references to either cotton or cloth or clothes, one is tempted to conclude that clothing was just then coming into vogue. Let us contrast this with the state of elaborate clothing in slightly later times, as revealed in the Ten Idylls and *Putanah:nu:tu.* By this time several sorts of cloth were in vogue:—

(1) *Atuvai.* This was cotton cloth, but of a finer texture than the "thiri" above-mentioned, and occurs at *Putanah:nu:tu* 154:10; 398:20; *Porunh-ara:ttuppat:ai* 83; *Citupanjamu:lam* (சிறுபஞ்சமூலம்) 236; *Nhet:unnalva:t:ai* 35. The *Kutunh-thokai* does not mention this cloth at all, as we have earlier pointed out.

(2) *kalingkam.* This was woven out of the finest cotton thread, so fine that the thread was hardly visible. This exquisite cloth is mentioned at *Putanha:nu:tu* 383:11; 392:15; 393:18; 397:15; 400:13; *Mathuraikka:nji* 554, 721; *Nhet:unnalva:t:ai* 134, 146; *Malaippat:ukat:a:m* 561.

(3) *thukil.* This is explained by the Comm. as "ven:pat:t:u", i.e. white silk, evidently a costly dress, worn mostly by women, as one gathers from the numerous references thereto from *Akanah:nu:tu* and *Putanah:nu:tu* down to *Ci:-vaka cinhtha:man:i.* The *Kutunhthokai* never mentions this: but "thukil" is referred to at several places in other works.[2] The *Paripa:t:al* which many consider to be the latest of the Eight Anthologies, has also several references to

[2] *Akanha:nu:tu* 387:7; *Putanha:nu:tu* 337:9; *Perumpa:n:a:ttuppat:ai* 235, 329; *Mullaippa:t:t:u* 53; *Nhet:unhalva:t:ai* 145, 181; *Pat:t:inappa:lai* 107, 168; *Kutinjippa:t:u* 55; *Maruka:ttuppat:ai* 15, 296; and at *Ci:vaka-cinhtha:man:i* 34d (with kot:i), 67b, 71a, 164b (with kil-i), 235a (with nhu:l), 428b (compared to the spray from a mountain-stream), 617a (where it is expressly called ven:thukil = white silk), 624a (the same), 873d, 375a,

"thukil".[3] This cloth was generally interwoven with threads depicting flowers.

(4) *thu*: (v) *ut:ai* occurs a *Muruka:ttuppaṭ:ai* 138. It really consists of two words "thu:" = pure and "ut : ai" = dress. The Comm. generally equates this cloth with "kalingam" above.

(5) *pat* : *t* : *u* = silk cloth. This term occurs not only at *Akanah:nu:tu* 236:11, as I have already stated, but also at *Pat:t:inappa:lai* 107 and *Muruka:ttup-pat:ai* 155. In this last place it is called pat:t:-ut:ai = silk dress. We notice three things:

(a) *Kutunhthokai* does not have the words "atuvai", "thu : (v) ut : ai", "thukil" and mentions "kalingam" but once.

(b) *Muruka:ttuppat:ai,* which is considered to be the latest of the Ten Idylls is the only one that uses the noun "ut:ai" for dress, although the verbal form "ut:i:i = "having dressed, clothed oneself or others", is fairly frequent in the 18 major classics.

(c) Although the word-lists at the end of the Ten Idylls or of the Eight Anthologies give the word "a:t:ai" = dress, I have never come across this word *in their actual texts*. Almost the earliest instance of "a:t:ai" in this sense is at *Pal-amol-i* 26d: "an:i ella:m a:t:aiyin pin" = jewels come after one's dress. *Kutunhthokai*

931a, 1077a, 1094a, 1184d, 1481b, 1558c, 1568b, 1572c, 1715a (with an:ai), 1863d, 2213d (with mut:i), 2475b (with ceppu = a bronze box, wherein these costly dresses were kept), 2505c (with ce:kkai = the bed covered over with silk), 2635b and 2663a (*with the attribute* "*paim*" = soft), 2685b (kan:kol: l:a:th thukil, which the Comm. explains as இழை தெரியாத ஆடை = the cloth the texture of which is invisible to the naked eye), 2707c (with pu:nhita), 2880a (where it seems to refer to men's dress), at *Ci:vaka cinhtha:man:i* 344c it is termed அணங்கு நுண் துகில் which Nhacc. explains as இழை தெரியாது வருந்தும் நுண்ணிய துகில்.

[3] At 7:46; 10:79 and 80; 12.93 and 98; 13:2; 16:23; 17:1; 22:19.

295 : 1 supports the sense of this proverb or wise saying thus :—

உடுத்தும் தொடுத்தும் பூண்டும் செரீஇயும்

having clothed ourselves first and then adorned ourselves diversely.

We shall not be off the mark in seeing an intimate connexion between "at:ai"=leaf[4] and "a:t:ai"=dress. This contention appears valid in view of (1) the closeness of meaning between words of the same nature with short and long initial syllables, e.g. kan:=eye and ka:n=to see; pat:u=to suffer and pa:t:u=suffering; (2) the alternance in the length of the basic vowel between early classical Tamil and mediaeval Tamil, which I shall tackle later; and (3) what I have stated above the green-leaf dress of antiquity.

G. How the *Kutunhthokai* Anthology was completed.

When one reads through the Commentaries of Nhacc. on the *Tholka:ppiam* and on other works, one constantly comes across citations from the early classics. Most of these are to be found in the extant classics, mainly the Eight Anthologies. But quite a few are not in them. Thus in Part I of his Comm. on the *Tholka:ppiam Porul:athika:ram* on page 553 is found a love poem of seven lines, which cannot be traced to any of the extant Anthologies. On page 556 is found another, of five lines; on the next page there is a third, consisting of seven lines. At the end of page 558, there is a fourth of three lines. On page 568 is a fifth, likewise of three lines. A sixth is to be found at the end of page 574. All these six stanzas are to be found in the Comm. of Nhacc. on but one sūtra of *Tholka:ppiam Porul:-adhika:ram,* namely 146. Similarly, on *Tholka:ppiam*

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4 At *Kutunhthokai* 9:4; 246:2; 352:1; *Putanah:nu:tu* 103:10; 266:3; *Mathuraika:nji* 624; *Paripa:t:al* 13:50; *Ci:vaka cinhtha:man:i* 2674a.

Porul:athika:ram, sūtra 114, Nhacc. has several citations: of these, the first (on p. 454), the fourth and fifth (on p. 455), the second and third citations on p. 459, the second on p. 462, the second, third and fourth on p. 471, the third on p. 473, consisting of four lines, the third on p. 486, also of four lines, the first on p. 488, likewise of four lines, all the three stanzas on p. 493, the last on p. 499, the last on p. 514, etc. are samples. There are several more throughout the work. Most of these stanzas are of the same style as the *Kutunhthokai* and, like its poems, range between four and eight lines. All of them deal with love and are composed in the "*akaval*" metre, just like the *Kutunhthokai.* In diction they appear contemporary with that work. Hence we are obliged to surmise that the compilers of the *Kutunhthokai* rejected them on the ground that they did not come up to that level of excellence of sentiment and expression, which they had laid down as their standard.

Now let us advert to what Dr. U. V. Saminathaiyar states on page 11 of his afore-mentioned Introduction to *Kutunhthokai.* "The compilers of the Eight Anthologies had before them poems composed in the three metres:— a:ciriyappa: (i.e. akaval), kālippa: and paripa:t:al. They first took up the poems composed in the akaval metre and dealing with love. These they divided into three groups, starting with the shortest ones and ending with the longest poems. The shortest poems were therefore called the *Kutunh thokai,* while the longest were termed the *Nhet:unh thokai.*" From this assertion of the eminent Doctor as well as from my statements and arguments throughout this article, it is quite clear that the *Kutunhthokai* was the earliest compilation of Tamil poems extant.

Two pages earlier, the same learned Doctor makes an admission, which was (independently of him) made by K. N. Sivarajapillai in his "Chronology of the Early Tamils". The compilers had another standard in their

mind's eye, besides that of excellence. This was to make each of the four earliest Anthologies consist of 400 poems. For this purpose they did not hesitate, when the need arose, to compose a few of their own or to take over a poem or several ones of their own time, although they were supposed to be collecting poems of five or six centuries earlier than their own time.

" அவற்றைத் தொகுத்தவர்கள் ஒவ்வொன்றிலும் நானூறு பாக்கள் இருக்கும்படி தம் காலத்துப் புலவர்கள் இயற்றியவற்றையும் சேர்த்து அமைத்தார்கள் என்று கருத இடம் உண்டாகின்றது."

Fortunately in the case of the *Kutunhthokai* there was no need for them to supplement the earlier poems with later ones, composed by contemporary poets of their own time: for there was such an abundance of these early *short* poems, as I have already shown. In the case of *Nhattin:ai* and still more of *Akanah:nu:tu* and *Putanah:nu:tu* there seems to have been such a need. It is this fact that explains the peculiar antiquity of style and diction on the part of the *Kutunhthokai* and the exceptional conformity of this anthology, in preference to all others, to the ancient regulations, enunciated at *Tholka:ppiam Elu-ththathika:ram* 62, 64 and 65, which I have already elucidated above.

H. An Objection and the Answer to it.

The Objection :—We now know that the Dravidian civilisation in India itself goes as far back as the third millennium B.C. How is it then that you can state that the *Kutunhthokai* poems show the ancient Tamils or Tamilians in the *primitive* stage of culture, with women clad in leaf-garments and with cotton clothes just coming into vogue, about the third or fourth century B.C. ?

The Answers :—(1) In three of my articles to " Tamil Culture ", namely " the Affinities between the Ancient Cultures of Crete and Egypt and those of India and

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Sumer ", Part I [5] and Part II,[6] and " the Exact Connexion between the Harappan and Sumerian Cultures ",[7] I have myself maintained that the Harappan culture is Dravidian and that it dates from at least 2,700 B.C. in North India. But I have also stated there that under the hammer-blows of Indra's war-bands, aided by the swift horse-drawn chariots that the Aryans were the first to employ in war, the Harappan Empire and, to a great extent, the Harappan civilisation were destroyed about 1,800 B.C. It happens often in the course of history that without the physical basis of material welfare, minimum comforts and a bit of elegance, as a result of destruction by repeated earthquakes, as in Crete, or of wars, as in Mexico, with the consequent poverty and destitution, an ancient and flourishing civilisation is almost totally obliterated and is only with great difficulty and by slow stages rebuilt. Such may very well have been the case with the Dravidians in India.

(2) It is true that in my article to " Tamil Culture ", " the Earliest Tamil Poems Extant ",[8] I have maintained that *Kutunhthokai* 75 and *Akanah:nu:tu* 265 were composed when the Nandas were in the height of their splendour and before the accession of the Maurya Emperors to the throne of Pa:t:aliputhra in North India, i.e. c. 324 B.C. But there is nothing to prevent a few of the *Kutunhthokai* poems being composed much earlier than this. Further research is necessary in this matter.

(3) It is good to have more than one string to one's bow. Accordingly I am prepared to give an alternate explanation for the phenomena, which I have exposed in sections E and F above. The Tamils, like many Eastern peoples, are great traditionalists, especially on festive and ceremonial occasions. Tamilians, who throughout their

[5] Vol. IV, 2, pages 169 to 175.
[6] Vol. V, 1, pages 56 to 65.
[7] Vol. V, 4, October 1956.
[8] Vol. IV, 1, pages 90 to 98.

lives use tables and chairs for their meals which are served on plates, are known even today to discard all this and their forks, spoons and knives as well, when they are invited for a wedding feast. Then they recline on a mat or mattress and consume the festive meal of rice and many curries with their hands out of plaintain-leaves. On this analogy we may state that while the female sex in the *Kutunhthokai* days used cotton clothes ordinarily, the heroine was decked in leaf-garments on ceremonial occasions : and these happen to be the very ones mentioned in the *Kutunhthokai* poems concerned. This does not detract from their antiquity.

Kannan Pattu

(Translation from Bharati)

P. S. SUNDARAM

A poem is the product of an individual temperament; It is also conditioned by the peculiarities of the language in which it is written, and the race and culture of which it is the efflorescence. That in these circumstances it is essentially untranslatable is a truism. "It were", wrote Shelley, "as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principles of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet".

But great poetry is not only the product of an individual and a race but also, both in its origin and appeal, universal. The great poet belongs to all the world, and unless his greatness is of a quality to be perceived even through a (reasonably good) translation, it is idle to claim that he is a world poet—only his greatness cannot be gauged by anybody unacquainted with his language!

In his programme for Tamil which Bharati drew up in one of his poems, he made it clear that it is no use our whispering to each other in secret about our ancient glory. "The test of great poetry is that people of other countries also should recognise its greatness".

The following translation was made with the conviction that, properly rendered, Bharati could make a profound impression as a lyric poet on foreign readers. Throbbing with emotion and exquisitely musical, his poems are best rendered in English in regular metres with all the resources of rhyme.

The poem that follows is taken from Bharati's *Kannan Pāttu,* a series of lyrics extolling Krishna in his various aspects of Friend, Father, Mother and Child, Teacher and Student, King, Playboy, Servant and Master, Lover and Beloved, Family Goddess. There are twenty-three of these poems, many of them in the form, popularised by Browning, of dramatic lyrics. Though Krishna is the form more widely known, the Tamil form Kannan used by the poet has been retained. Those whose mother tongue is Hindi should have no difficulty in recognising in this form their *Kanha* or *Kanhai.*

KANNAN, MY BELOVED

Like a fly on a hook,
  Like a flame in the breeze,
My poor heart a-flutter
  Throbbed in unease;
Like a caged parrot
  I moped all alone—
What most pleased me once
  Now made me groan.

கண்ணன்—என் காதலன்

தூண்டிற் புழுவினைப்போல்—வெளியே
  சுடர் விளக்கினைப் போல்,
நீண்ட பொழுதாக—எனது
  நெஞ்சந் துடித்த தடீ!
கூண்டுக் கிளியினைப் போல்—தனிமை
  கொண்டு மிகவும் நொந்தேன்;
வேண்டும் பொருளை யெல்லாம்—மனது
  வெறுத்துவிட்ட தடீ!

Stretched on my mat,
  Fretful and weary,
I found even my mother
  Dismal and dreary :
And as for you friends
  Ceaselessly chattering,
Like a disease I dreaded you
  And your pattering.

No food for me, dear,
  No sleep and no rest ;
Nor fragrance in aught—
  Even flowers the best ;
No firmness, no fixity,
  Only confusion ;
No joy even fleeting,
  Pain in profusion.

பாயின் மிசை நானும்—தனியே
  படுத் திருக்கையி லே,
தாயினைக் கண்டாலும்,—சகியே !
  சலிப்பு வந்த தடீ !
வாயினில் வந்ததெல்லாம்,—சகியே !
  வளர்த்துப் பேசிடு வீர் ;
நோயினைப் போலஞ்சி னேன் ; —சகியே !
  நுங்க ளுறவையெல் லாம்.

உணவு செல்லவில்லை ;—சகியே !
  உறக்கங் கொள்ளவில்லை.
மணம் விரும்பவில்லை ;—சகியே !
  மலர் பிடிக்கவில்லை ;
குண முறுதி யில்லை ;—எதிலும்
  குழப்பம் வந்த தடீ !
கணமும் உள்ளத்திலே—சுகமே
  காணக் கிடைத்த தில்லை.

Milk tasted bitter
  And bed proved a-scarring ;
Dear Polly's twitter
  Hateful and jarring :
Four doctors in conference
  Said, "Too late they have seen us" ;
The bridge-side astrologer
  Blamed Saturn and Venus.

In a dream, on a night,
  Unseen, unknown,
Somebody touched me—
  My heart's very own.
Woke I a-quiver
  My sweet one to capture :
Naught was to seize there
  Except the rapture !

பாலுங் கசந்த தடீ !—சகியே !
  படுக்கை நொந்த தடீ !
கோலக் கிளிமொழியும்—செவியில்
  குத்த லெடுத்த தடீ !
நாலு வயித்தியரும்—இனிமேல்
  நம்புதற் கில்லை யென்றார் ;
பாலத்துச் சோசியனும்—கிரகம்
  படுத்து மென்று விட்டான்.

கனவு கண்டதிலே—ஒருநாள்
  கண்ணுக்குத் தோன்றா மல்,
இனம் விளங்க வில்லை—எவனோ
  என்னகந் தொட்டு விட்டான்.
வினவக் கண் விழித்தேன் ;—சகியே !
  மேனி மறைந்து விட்டான் ;
மனதில் மட்டிலுமே—புதிதோர்
  மகிழ்ச்சி கண்ட தடீ !

A cool wave drenched me,
  I was myself again ;
In all parts of the house
  Did my relish regain ;
Desire surged upward—
  My heart Joy's abode—
Fear was a dead thing,
  Beauty in strode !

The spot where he touched me
  With his finger and palm—
It thrills and it tingles,
  It stills and is calm.
Who is this unknown ?
  I thought and I thought :
And there stood Kannan's image
  With shapeliness wrought !

உச்சி குளிர்ந்ததடீ ;—சகியே !
  உடம்பு நேராச்சு ;
மச்சிலும் வீடுமெல்லாம்—முன்னைப்போல்
  மனத்துக் கொத்த தடீ !
இச்சை பிறந்ததடீ—எதிலும்
  இன்பம் விளைந்ததடீ ;
அச்ச மொழிந்ததடீ !—சகியே !
  அழகு வந்த தடீ !

எண்ணும் பொழுதிலெல்லாம்—அவன்கை
  இட்ட விடத்தினி லே
தண்ணென் றிருந்ததடி !—புதிதோர்
  சாந்தி பிறந்ததடீ !
எண்ணி யெண்ணிப் பார்த்தேன் ;—அவன்தான்
  யாரெனச் சிந்தை செய்தேன் ;
கண்ணன் திருவுருவம்—அங்ஙனே
  கண்ணின் முன் நின்ற தடீ !

Some Aspects relating to the Establishment and Growth of European Settlements along the Tamil Coast in the Seventeenth Century

S. ARASARATNAM.

The phenomenon of large settlements of foreign traders in the main centres of Asian trade does not begin with the coming of the Europeans to Asia. The studies of Moreland on India and Van Leur on the Malayan Archipelago have shown that there existed in both these regions trading settlements of foreigners in such places as Calicut and Malacca.[1] Arab settlements were a feature of Indian trading stations, just as Chinese colonies flourished in the Malay Archipelago. Not much evidence, however, is forthcoming on the nature of the relationship between these traders and the indigenous sovereign and the rights normally enjoyed by the former against the latter. Moreland would have us believe that even before the Europeans there was in existence a kind of mercantile extra territoriality by which the foreign settlement had acquired the right to manage a considerable part of its internal affairs without interference from the lord of the land.[2] The Mopla merchants of the Malabar and Madura coasts had their own separate heads who dispensed justice for members of their community according to their own laws and

[1] W. H. Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb* (London, 1923), pp. 220-226; J. C. Van Leur, *Indonesian Trade and Society* (The Hague, Bandung, 1955), pp. 194-196.

[2] Moreland, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-222.

freely followed their own religious and social customs and practices. Such rights exercised by foreigners were not held to interfere with the sovereignty of the ruler

When, in the 17th Century, various European powers entered into competition for the trade of India, there was no one set pattern of practices or regulations that traders could follow. Coming, as they did, from a distance of thousands of miles, it was but natural that they should try to set up more permanent habitats in the centres of trade than their Asian counterparts. With the increase in the volume of trade that each nation was handling, its ties with the Indian soil became greater. A greater number of its officials had to be stationed in India ; larger godowns were needed to store up its goods ; a greater hold was necessary on the people to whom it was increasingly larger advances of capital. Factory grew into fort, fort into settlement. While this was the broad pattern of development, the manner in which it took place varied infinitely with each power and every region. The most elementary connection was where the European power had just a hired house on the mainland which contained both its one or two officials and all its goods awaiting transportation. From there it moved on to the construction of a larger dwelling, belonging to it completely or by an eternal lease of the ground on which it was constructed. A major advance towards security was taken when the power received permission from the sovereign and constructed a fort within which its residences and all its effects were protected. This permission was grudgingly given, if ever, following a military defeat at the hand of the European power. When the European power was able to persuade the sovereign to renounce all his rights to the land on which the fort was situated, sometimes by commuted payment of the taxes that the place was obliged to bring, the fort became absolutely free of any interference from the local authority. Outright conquest was, of course, the pinnacle of authority which few European powers could afford.

Once the fort was constructed and some measure of security ensured for the European the settlement grew. The officers found it safe to live with their families within the area of the Fort. Thus a European community sprang up and around them, attending to their needs and performing the various functions connected with their trade, collected an indigenous community of mixed castes. The greater the security afforded by the place, the larger the European community, the bigger the town and its Indian population. The 17th Century, generally speaking, was in South India a period of instability and political strife. This feature in turn affected the growth of European settlements in some cases favourably, in others adversely.

The legacy of the preceding century is of some importance. The Portuguese had held undisputed supremacy as the only Western power along the Indian coast. Their attention was centred predominantly on the Malabar coast and later northwards to Goa and Daman. However, as they realised the potentiality of the cloth trade between the Carnatic coast and the East Indian Islands, small settlements of Portuguese traders began to grow up on the Eastern coast too. Of these the most noteworthy is that of San Thome. The prevalence of a legend connecting up this place with the Apostle St. Thomas encouraged the proselytising zeal of the Portuguese who erected a church here. In the course of the 16th Century, this settlement seems to have developed both into a seat of intensive Catholic missionary activity and of prosperous trade. Travellers' accounts of both this century and the next speak of the existence of several churches, monasteries and a Jesuit College. The many legends that were current in these times and reports of miracles connected with various aspects of the Apostle St. Thomas made the place a centre of pilgrimage not only for Catholics but even for Hindus from villages round about. There was a large Parish of Christian converts looked after by several priests. It would appear that a spacious and well-constructed town had grown

up here and a considerable harbour handling a large volume of trade.[1]

Another region where the impact of the Portuguese was felt was along the coast of Madura in the southernmost part of the peninsula. Because of its proximity to the centres of Portuguese power in Malabar and Ceylon their influence had begun to make itself felt in the course of the century. They were attracted here by the existence in interior villages of supply centres for all manner of coarse and fine textiles and a pearl fishery along the coastline. With the acquisition of Tuticorin there followed a gradual process of penetration ending up not merely in the control of Tuticorin and the seven other harbours here but even of an undisputed exercise of civil and criminal jurisdiction over the Paravas who inhabited these harbours. This development was helped by the fact that the Nayaks of Madura were not greatly concerned with the control of trade and the exercise of authority over the coastline. This they seem to have left in the hands of the Paravas, Muslims of the coast and foreigners, being merely content to maintain an open door policy with regard to trade.[2] The way was thus open for the superior European power to emerge into a position of dominance. Local events themselves played into their hands. There had always been friction between the Parava and the Muslim inhabitants of the coast. In the course of one of these internecine conflicts the Paravas hit upon the expedient of summoning aid from the Portuguese who willingly took them under their protection. Under the protection of the Portuguese the Paravas were established in positions of dominance along the coast and in return they embraced Christianity *en masse*. A few years later Francis Xavier, the celebrated missionary, took up residence

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[1] All evidence collected together in Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras* I (London, 1913), pp. 286-305.

[2] S. Arunachalam, *History of the Pearl Fishery on the Tamil Coast* (Annamalai Nagar, 1952), pp. 96-8.

among the Paravas and instructed the people who had embraced Christianity only in name.[1]

These events had given the Portuguese a political and a religious foothold on the Madura coast. There were no Portuguese settlements as such here. There was no place conducive to the development of European settlements. But the religious tie was strengthened and the whole coast was littered with churches and seminaries. Early observers of the Dutch East India Company, which displaced the Portuguese, speak of the immense influence of the priests over the people. There were three large churches in Tuticorin built of stone. Each of the smaller ports had a church of its own. The influence of Catholicism in this region may be gauged from the fact that later on, when the Portuguese had lost their political control over Ceylon, Madura became the centre of clandestine missionary activity in Dutch possessions. The Portuguese settlement proper in this area is further eastwards in Nagapatnam. This was a walled-in town built and owned by the Portuguese and was the seat of their naval and military power in this region. There were, consequently, several Portuguese families in residence here and an active social life. This is evidenced from the fact that when they were expelled from this place in 1658 the Dutch found that the majority of the inhabitants were either *Mestices* (in the definition of a contemporary Dutch writer) 'such as are born of a Portuguese father and a she blackamoor', or *Kastices* 'such as their fathers were blackamoors and their mothers Portuguese women'.[2] Here too there were several large churches and houses built according to Portuguese fashion.

It is evident that though actual Portuguese settlements on the Tamil coast were few and far between their influence was felt in several of the trading centres in this region.

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[1] G. M. Moraes, *St. Francis Xavier Apostolic Nuncio*, 1542-52 (Bombay, 1952).

[2] Mr. John Nieuhoff's remarkable Voyages and Travels in *A Collection of Voyages and Travels II* (London, 1745), pp. 198-199.

Their religion proved to be a notable medium for the extension of their influence and had penetrated parts of the coastline. Their comparative freedom of intercourse with the native inhabitants had resulted in a group of half-caste peoples who inhabited some of the sea ports. As privateers and fidalgos they were found all over, sometimes sailing their own vessels, at other times in the employ of private Indian merchants. Long after their political power in India had declined their influence remained and, as will be seen later, they played an important role in the founding and development of many a European settlement in India.

The 17th Century brings more European nations into the scene. Dutch, English, Danes and French, in turn, seek their fortunes in Asian trade. The Coromandel coast, forming a vital link in this trade, attracts all of them who begin to work for footholds in this area which would give them positions of vantage in relation to the trade. Ideas of monopoly and political control follow in the wake of competition. Trade has to be backed by power if it is to be safeguarded from an enemy nation or even to be wrested from her. This power has to be lodged at convenient points along the coastline and secured from both the Europeans as well as indigenous states. A new emphasis is thus given to the problem of European settlements. As a result of this European competition, the share of the Europeans in the country trade which had been negligible in the preceding century, now began to increase by leaps and bounds. The European trading nations were thus on the look out for suitable places along the coast which may be used as centres of their trade. None of them was looking for political aggrandizement. It was sufficient if, by consent with the native authority they could lease out strategically situated places insured with certain recognised rights.

The first reaction of the native powers was to receive the prospective traders with open arms and bestow several favours on them. The powers encountered little or no diffi-

culty in contracting treaties with local princes guaranteeing certain privileges. In the first place they were permitted to occupy a certain demarcated territory and to erect structures for their residence and storage of goods. In April 1610, the Dutch East India Company entered into a treaty with the Raja of Carnatic by which they were allowed to reside and trade at Pulicat (Paleacatte). They were to pay toll on all incoming and outgoing goods at the concession rate of 2%.[1] Two years later by a further treaty they were allowed to construct a fortress there which they completed soon after with the name of Fortress Geldria.[2] Later when the King of Golconda overran the Carnatic, a treaty was entered into with him by which they were given complete freedom of tolls at Pulicat.[3] In 1639 the English acquired similar concessions at Madras. They negotiated with the Nayak Damarla Venkatadri, Governor of the area for the King of Carnatic, and received the right to trade freely there and to construct a fortress. This was Fort St. George. They were also exempted from the payment of all customs dues.[4] When in 1658 the Dutch had expelled the Portuguese from Nagapatnam, they sought to reinforce this right to conquest with a treaty of recognition with the Nayak of Tanjore in whose domains the city lay. Here too they secured freedom from tolls.[5] Thus all the trading powers were unanimous in their desire to secure some recognised title to their settlements and to put the whole problem of customs dues on a definite footing.

The right to construct fortresses and keep the settlements in a state of preparedness for war was generally desired by the European power but not always granted. It was desired because it would give the Europeans the security that was necessary for the expansion of their trade and would provide a defensive shield behind which the

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1 *Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlando—Indicum,* Ed. Heeres, (Hague, Batavia, 1887-1931), I, p. 84.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 101.
3 *Ibid.*, p. 230.
4 W. Foster, *English Factories in India,* 1637-41, p. 157.
5 *Corpus Dip.*, II, p. 138.

settlement could develop. Madras and Pulicat, the two settlements that prospered in these years, owed their prosperity mostly to their fortified character. It was not always granted because it would cut into the sovereignty of the indigenous state if it were to admit an armed power within its borders. On the coast of Madura, the Dutch tried their best to secure permission to erect a fortress. Successive deputations were sent to the Nayak and peaceful persuasion as well as force was used but the Nayak was adamant in his refusal to permit an armed fortress anywhere in his domains. He was, however, quite willing to give the Dutch the right to build ordinary houses anywhere along the sea coast for purposes of trade.[1] The history of the Dutch settlement at Tuticorin illustrates the practicality of European policy in this respect. More than once the armies of the Nayak attacked the settlement and the Dutch had to withdraw with all their movable assets into the security of their possessions in Ceylon.

The right to administer justice and punish offenders for acts done within the area of European jurisdiction was generally given without any fuss. This provision is seen in its most effective aspect where it relates to the enforcement of payment of debts that merchants have incurred on the delivery of goods for which advance payment has already been made. There had to be some effective machinery to ensure the security of money invested by the Europeans in the land. The *Caul*[2] granted by the Madura Nayak to the Dutch in June 1645 states : " You shall have right of preference on all merchants who trade with you and are in debt to you ; your money will be paid first even from what they owe me ".[3] In Pulicat they were given the right to seize and place under arrest anyone who failed to fulfil a contract for the delivery of cloth.[4] In Madras the native authority promised the English that they would make good

[1] *Corpus Dip.*, II, p. 145.
[2] 'A lease or grant in writing' see *Hobson-Jobson* SV COWLE.
[3] *Corpus Dip.*, I, p. 456.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 83-85.

any sum the English may lose through defaulting merchants or weavers and deliver their persons to the English authority if they happen to abscond in the interior.[1] Another aspect to this problem was the administration of criminal justice within the settlements in order to preserve law and order. Generally there was agreement to return absconding criminals in each other's territories. There is record of a murder committed in Madras and the Naik was informed of it. Though those involved were native inhabitants the Nayak issued instructions that justice be done according to the laws of England.[2] For the development and prosperity of the settlement it was essential that it received a reputation for orderly government and impartial administration of justice.

Geographically, most settlements tendeded to divide themselves into two sections—a European quarter and a quarter inhabited by local inhabitants. The European quarter was situated along the sea and would consist of buildings used as stores and houses for the officers. If there were a fort it would usually embrace the European section of the town as in Madras and Pulicat. The soldiers were generally stationed here and the place was so fashioned that in the event of an attack from inland they could protect their lives and property within this fortification. Beyond this was the native town where lived the merchants, labourers who performed all kinds of services to the Europeans and, in some instances, those few Indians who had become Christian converts. Sometimes, as in Nagapatnam and Tuticorin, entire families of weavers chose to leave their villages and settle down under European jurisdiction, particularly if they found the native authority exacting in its impositions. When sufficiently good relations had been established with the local authority and the people as to produce a sense of general security, European families ventured out of the fort and lived in the native quarter. This was unavoidable

[1] Foster, *English Factories*, 1637-41, p. 157.
[2] *Ibid*, p. 315.

later as the European population increased and all could not find room within the fortified town. In Madras towards the latter half of the 17th Century most of the subordinate employees of the Company, both civil and military, were living in the outer town. It is seen from Abbe Carre's observations that it was not unusual to meet Englishmen and other Europeans in the interior of the country.[1]

The growth of the settlement and the prevalence of an active social life within it depended on several considerations. Some of the powers followed more restrictive policies than others and this hindered progress. The rapid development of the English settlement at Madras as contrasted with the Dutch at Pulicat showed the advantages of a more liberal general attitude. European observers of the 17th Century of all nationalities are unanimous in their view that the city of Madras was a model European settlement in India and was far ahead of others of the same type. Though at the beginning of the century, the English began their career in the East as rivals of the Portuguese and allies of the Dutch, after the first three decades this position changed and from then on they were more friendly towards the Portuguese than to the Dutch. The Portuguese were by now feeling the full force of Dutch opposition to their positions in the East and hence were becoming increasingly dependent on the English. Thus, though to begin with they opposed the establishment of an English settlement so close to their own at San Thome, later on there were friendly relations and mutual co-operation between them. The circumstances that favoured most the rise of Madras, however, was the fall of San Thome to the King of Golconda in 1662. This resulted in a mass exodus of Portuguese and their dependents to Madras. Thus the population of Madras increased immensely and the English were in possession of valuable man-power of the type they could use for their diverse needs. It was observed by several people in the latter half of the 17th Century that there were

[1] The Travels of Abbe Carre, 1672-1674 (London, 1947) II, p. 358.

plenty of Portuguese settled in the city of Madras. Some of them were taken into the local defence force and supplemented the usually meagre English garrison. " The number of English may amount to three hundred ", says a contemporary, Fryer (1673), " of Portuguese as many thousand ".[1] Some of the Portuguese were men of considerable affluence, being successful traders. But most of them were odd jobmen and not particularly well off. There was a carefully maintained distinction among them of white Portuguese and black Portuguese and intermarriage between these two groups was very rare. The latter were those who had intermarried with Indian races while the former had maintained their racial purity. Their general living habits left much to be desired.

One of the factors that attracted the Portuguese and their Indian co-religionists to Madras was the toleration in matters of religion practised by the English. To begin with, the Indian states granted to every European power that sought to settle along this coast the right of unhindered practice of its own religion. It was in the divisions between Catholics and Protestants that the trouble arose. It has been seen above that the Portuguese had succeeded in establishing pockets of Catholicism in many parts of the coast. The later Protestant powers would naturally be expected to view those with hostility. Happily for the prosperity of the English settlement of Madras, these differences were not allowed to come in the way of a policy of religious tolerance. In fact, both from official records and unofficial travellers' diaries, there is evidence of a flourishing and active Catholic community, public worship of their faith in their churches and priests to attend to their spiritual wants. Much of this was due to the existence for a long time of two French Capuchin priests, Father Ephraim and Zenon, who maintained cordial relations with the political authority and won several concessions for the Catho-

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[1] John Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia* (London, 1909) I, p. 107.

lics. Owing to their long residence in the country (over 40 years) they had a phenomenal knowledge of local customs and habits and were of immense help to the English in matters of trade and politics.[1] Besides the English preferred having them in the settlement to having Portuguese priests of whom they were very suspicious.[2]

The split in the Christian faith which so dominated the history of Europe in these years was reflected in the East also. Largely owing to the influence wielded by the two French priests and the presence of a large Portuguese community, Catholicism appeared to be much more virile than Anglicanism in Madras. This offended the Anglican priests who urged the officials to take strong action against Catholicism. Even among the employees of the Company, there appeared to be several Catholics and others who embraced Catholicism because of their marriage with Portuguese girls who were the only whites available for matrimony. The Anglican community was not well looked after and during certain periods there was no chaplain at all in the Fort. Rules and regulations there were against the public practice of the Catholic religion but their compliance depended on the Agent and high officials of the Fort. Sir William Langhorn, Agent at Madras 1670-77, was, for example, more tolerant than most others and was very accommodating to the Catholic community. His action in firing a salute of guns at the consecration of a newly built Catholic Church in Madras brought on him the disapproval of the Directors from London who also wrote : " We........desire to give as little countenance and encouragement to that religion [Catholicism] as they do to ours ; and we would have you discountenance and discourage all of our nation that any ways incline to that profession ".[3] His successor Master (1677-1681) was less tolerant and took several measures to curtail the activities of Catholic priests and to reduce their

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[1] *Travels of Abbe Carre,* II, pp. 549-553.
[2] Fawcett, *English Factories in India,* 1670-77, II, p. 154.
[3] Quoted in J. Talboys Wheeler, *Madras in the Olden Time* (Madras, 1882), p. 47.

increasing influence over English inhabitants of the city. The Test Act of 1673 forbidding Roman Catholics from holding office under the Crown was strictly applied in India also.[1] Yet never was such drastic action taken as would result in a mass exodus of Catholics that would have affected the prosperity of the settlement.

The Dutch experienced even greater difficulty in dealing with the Catholics in their settlements. On the Madura coast they had succeeded to positions that the Portuguese had held for long and they felt that the extirpation of the political power of the Portuguese from that region should be followed by the rooting out of their religion too. In this they had to admit failure. The Parava community along the coast stuck doggedly to their faith and no amount of prohibitory bans by the Dutch would wean them away from their loyalty. The Catholic priests continued to use the Kingdom of Madura as a base for their activities and secretly attended to the needs of the Paravas. Soon after the Dutch conquest of Tuticorin in 1658, Fr. Baldaeus, a Protestant *padre* in the service of the East India Company, was asked to carry out a reformation of the Church in this town and its dependencies. He records, with frankness, the failure of his efforts and the fact that the Paravas preferred to walk miles into the country to be administered by their own priests than listen to the preaching of the Protestant religion.[2] Though their political hold over the Parava community was complete and the latter were loyal to them, they never could win them over to their religion. Language was a great barrier between the Protestant priests and the people. Very few of them could speak Tamil, while as Rev. Valentijn observes, most of the Catholic priests could speak, read and write the Tamil language.[3] The Protestant faith itself was not as attractive as Catholicism, with its rich ceremonialism. Baldaeus records that once he removed

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[1] Fawcett, *English Factories in India*, 1678-84, IV, p. 6.
[2] Baldaeus, *Naewkeurige Beschryringe Van Malabar en Choromandel, en het Eyland Ceylon* (Amsterdam, 1672), p. 150.
[3] Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost Indian V* (Amsterdam, 1726), p. 237.

the images and ornamental decorations from the Catholic Church at Tuticorin, the Paravas refused to enter it.[1]

One problem that confronted all European powers was that of keeping men of their own race in good behaviour. Authorities in most settlements were hard put to it in exercising discipline among their men. The average type that came out East were adventurous and not very educated. Those settlements which had so expanded as to necessitate Europeans living in the native quarter were the most difficult to handle. An overfondness for the bottle, consequent brawls and sexual immorality were the common vices. Everyone blamed the Portuguese as bringing down the tone of moral life in any place. The English at Madras grappled with this problem seriously as they were concerned with maintaining the reputation of the city. Regulations were introduced in 1672 limiting the opening hours and quantity of liquor served in taverns.[2] In a letter written by the Company's Chaplain at Madras, Rev. Warner, to the Directors (1676), he complains bitterly about the 'drunkenness, debauchery and profaneness' that prevailed in the settlement and the generally poor attendance at Church on Sundays.[3] The Dutch in Pulicat were faced with similar problems. They found that those soldiers who were forced to live outside the Fort generally got married to local women and their life left much to be desired. The Dutch seem to have generally had a reputation in these parts for intensive drunkenness. Daniel Havart, a contemporary Dutch writer, takes the trouble of refuting this and says that it is a story spread by their rivals, the English and the French, to tarnish their reputation.[4] However, as far as the native of Coromandel Coast was concerned, the European of this time was generally noted for his excessive drunkenness.

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1 Baldaeus, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

2 Fawcett, *English Factories*, 1670-77, II, pp. 31, 150, 179.

3 Quoted in Wheeler, *Madras*.........., pp. 34-36.

4 Daniel Havart, *Op en Ondergang van Cormandel* (Amsterdam, 1693), pp. 134-5.

The Seventeenth Century is of interest in the study of Europan contact with India as being a period when the attitudes of Westerners towards Indians is not coloured by the outlook of superiority which is so characteristic of a later age. Consciousness of difference there is and Europeans in India generally feel that they are in a land of strange people and strange customs. These differences are generally given expression to in a straightforward manner and with the least inhibition. There is evidence of a general desire to learn and know more about the people among whom they lived and to accommodate themselves more to their environment. Yet the European settlements maintained a character of foreign outposts, limited in their extent and the influence they wielded in the countries where they were implanted. However, the growing interest they were showing in the religions and customs of the people around them was to bear fruit in the next century when there emerge some distinguished scholars of all nationalities who have left behind valuable works on the language, history and culture of the Indian people.

Religious Landmarks in Pudukkottai

(Continued from TAMIL CULTURE, Vol. VI, No. 1)

LEO P. BAZOU.

VELS, COLAS, PANDYAS AND THE 'MERCHANT-PRINCES'.

Grants belonging to this new period are ascribed to the Cola and Pandya monarchs, even when they were due to the generosity of the local chieftains—the Muttaraiyars, the Irukku Vēls of Kodumbalur, the Pallavaraiyars of Sendamangalam, and the Vanniyan chiefs of Sirukkudi or the more famous and more powerful Guilds of Merchant-Princes who had undertaken the expenses. There is ample evidence of the luxuries enjoyed by the more important cities of Tamilagam, and of the large trade Dravidian emporiums carried on with the rest of India as well as with foreign countries in the Far-East and the distant and exotic lands of the Mediterranean West.

We might have remained in almost complete ignorance of the part played by the Pudukkottai region in the fields of culture and trade, if inscriptions had not survived to tell us of famous trade-guilds with high-sounding titles, such as 'The Five Hundred of the Thousand Districts in the Four Quarters', or 'The Eighteen towns', that traded 'with the Six continents'. It is not therefore mere chance which made Nāttukkottai Chettiyars, the genuine inheritors of the Middle Age 'Nagarattars', build their palatial residences in well-laid out towns in this area.[1]

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[1] K. R. Venkatarama Ayyar, *A Manual of the Pudukkottai State,* pp. 650 sqq. and 675 ; on Merchant-Guilds see also K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India,* Vol. I, 1955, pp. 158, 318 and 319 ; *Studies in Cola History and Administration,* 1932, passim.

But it was the spade which brought to light, in 1898, at Karukkakurichi, a village of the Kurinji region, typical evidence in the form of a hoard of Roman coins. Such finds are not uncommon on the site of ancient cities in Tamil Nād, but the considerable amount of gold coins found here gives it special significance. As many as 501 pieces bearing the effigies of ten successive Roman Emperors, from Augustus (29 B.C. to 14 A.D.) to Vespasian (69 to 79 A.D.) were unearthed here.[2]

Whether the actual donors of grants to Brahmanical institutions under the Colas and the Pandyas were princes or merchants, it is certain that Brahmanical Hinduism, even when it received royal recognition and patronage, did not succeed in stamping out ancient forms and values. The Dravidian 'Mother' kept her shrines by the side of the Brahmanized male deity and women had not yet lost their honoured place in society. Local princesses are frequently quoted in inscriptions as the main benefactresses. Intermarriage took place between chieftains, which continued right up to our own days e.g., between the royal houses of Pudukkottai, Sivaganga and Ramnad. Famous dancing girls are frequently referred to in inscriptions ; Brahmanical Hinduism, which had declared married women impure for sacrificial purposes, nevertheless allowed dancing girls almost the same rights as men and kept them in the service of its altars.

Such fine structures as the three masterpieces in stone called the *Mūvar Kovils*, at Kodumbalur, were the work of a local chieftain Bhuti Vikramasekari and of his two wives, Karralipirattiyal and Varugana.[3] Kongavanam of the Kodumbalur Irukku Vels conceived the daring project of bringing the water of the Cauvery to his capital in the northern-western portion of Pudukkottai just below Manapārai. He is reported to have actually begun digging a

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[2] S. Radha Krishna Aiyar, *A General History of the Pudukkotah State*, 1916, p. 51.
[3] Id., *ibid.*, Appendix iv.

canal.[4] But thanks to the Muslim invasion of the 14th century this capital city, which at one time boasted of as many as a hundred and eight shrines to the Lingam, is now a heap of ruins. The temples that have survived and the basements and sculptures still to be found amongst the ruins show what an important cultural and religious centre Kodumbalur must have been.

Deep mounds of earth, formed by the crumbled mud-houses, have considerably raised the level of the ground round the surviving temples, like a heavy shroud over a dead past. Thus have persisted the two Nagarams or Merchant-Guilds, which had for centuries enjoyed commercial and religious importance. And this story of woes repeats itself in many other once beautiful cities, of which ruined shrines in the invading wilderness are all that remains. Such is, among others, Madattu Kōvil, about halfway between Kiranur and Viralimalai, a beauty in stone of the purest Vijayanagar style ; there is not even a hamlet there now. Such is again Narttamalai with its twelve surviving temples and its many rock-caves round an almost depopulated village.

To the early Cola period, which marks the transition from the Pallava style, are to be ascribed a group of small but finely chiselled shrines, all in stone, at Kaliyappatti, Tiruppur, Visalur, Pannangudi, Tirukkattalai, Kannakudi, Narttamalai, Viralur and Enadi. Up to the middle of the 11th century new temples, including two Jain shrines, were still being built and ancient ones enlarged or remodelled in about thirty different places. From the middle eleventh century to the decline of the Great Colas in the 13th century, thirty more places show new structures and a significant feature is that shrines to the 'Mother' are built within the precincts of temples dedicated to the Lingam ;

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[4] On the Irukkuvels of Kodumbalur see the learned study of M. Arokiaswami M.A., Ph.D., *Velar Basin ;* also *Tamil Culture,* Vol. IV, No. 2, pp. 176 sqq.

the village people also went on erecting shrines of their own, apart from the official ones.

Each new structure meant more grants for the erection and the maintenance of its priests, servants, musicians, dancing girls, as well as for the performance of the daily *Puja*. The management of these temples and their revenues by the ' Ur ' or village community, sometimes jointly with the Brahmin ' Sabha ' and the ' Nagaram ' Merchant-Guild, gives one the impression that, in spite of heavy taxation and forced contributions towards the maintenance of this official form of worship, we are dealing with a contented peasantry.

It was too good to last. The time would arrive when Merchant-Guilds would have to hand over to the village Community their part in the management of temple affairs, and the villagers would show themselves less and less ready to settle their tithes for the worship of the gods and the maintenance of their servants. The secular power would have to intervene. Looking over the Narttamalai vale from one of the several hills that surround it, one cannot help becoming pensive. This too peaceful and intimate coomb with its now dry tanks and barren fields is a picture of desolation. But the many shrines and temples that mark every prominent spot in the depopulated village or on the slope of the hills, the caves and natural caverns and Mutts, Jain or Brahmanic, its Merchant-Guilds which have not been heard of since the 14th century, had all contributed to make the vale and the hills once hum with prayer and trade.

There are still a few Brahmins left, survivals from a forgotten age ; this may be the reason why they are men of simple taste and gentle disposition, men of few words too, whose subdued manner of speech is that of men given to inner thoughts. Discretion, a sense of the artistic, politeness without affectation, soft speech in melodious Tamil, which has none of the hardness and gutturality of

other places, are also typical features of the ordinary village people. It would seem that centuries of religious and cultural attainments have left their deep imprint upon the souls of all.

The religious structures here may not have attained the large proportions of the more important temples elsewhere. Lack of size is more than made up by the artistic dexterity which the local craftsmen brought to bear on their work and the refinement of the finished article. We are not dealing here with mass-production but with works of real art, and executed by artisans who, inspired by devotional fervour, treated them as a labour of love. The stone-cutters, carvers and sculptors, who worked here may not all have been artists as famous as their contemporaries elsewhere who enjoyed the patronage of kings and the rich but trained in highly-patronized schools their works, if simpler, show purer lines and a more delicate touch. The dancers their chisels carved—whether it was a Nataraja or a dancing girl, a complete sculpture or a mere carving upon a pillar, whether the artist was given the opportunity to display his full skill and produce his best or was left only with the drudgery of a mere sketch in stone—have here more elegance in their poise and more artistic and delicate touch in the rendering of bodily forms than will be found elsewhere, or in later periods.

The size of these earlier sculptures may be much smaller than those of the Madura Naick school (of which there are to be found here many examples) and were all inspired by religion, unlike the masterpieces from Naick times with their larger than human size statues, which are often highly sensuous, if not obscene. Early feminine forms, even when in the nude, are never immodest or alluring, and their rhythmic poise is more natural and more enchanting, too, because of the very absence of self-consciousness and self-conceit on the part of the Pudukkottai artist.

Religion and discretion seem to have been the prevailing keynote, the inspiring motive under the still prevailing influence of the cult of the ' Mother '—the ' Benign Mother ', as opposed to the fierce Kali of later days. The softness inculcated by the deeply humanized Jain monks had not yet been forgotten, and the ' Mother ' from Dravidian days had not yet degenerated into the Brahmanized ' wife ' or at her best the ' consort ' of the male deity. She is still the ' Maid ', unwedded and unattached, the ever-*Kaniya* and *Kumari*, the traditional ' Mangai ', ' Māligai ', ' Mathandai ' and ' Bālamma '.

Siva himself, whether in the Dakshinamurthi or the Nataraja form, is still the *Ishta Devata* that inspired the devotion of the early Saiva Hymnists. Here we find Dravidian art at its best. The statuary of the Saiva and Vaishnava rock-cut caves at Malaiyadipatti stands in a class apart both by its majesty and its refinement. In both these twin-caves large scenes have been chiselled out of the living rock with figures as large as life itself, if not larger, as in the case of the reclining Vishnu. The artist responsible for this particular masterpiece knew how to handle a chisel and a hammer. The imposing head of the sleeping Vishnu over-shadowed by the five-hooded Naga is by itself a study of strength in repose, softened down by a lingering smile upon the lips of the dormant deity.

In a class apart, too, stands the ruined temple of Madattu Kovil, a fine example of Vijayanagar style. In the implacable bright sun, it shines even today in all the splendour of stones that have just come out of the hands of carvers ; upon each pillar or cornice can be seen miniature masterpieces which are still a treat to the eye. The smiling Seven Virgins carved out of a single stone which lies abandoned among the ruins makes one regret that so much beauty should lie uncared for in a deserted place, with hardly any discriminating visitor to appreciate and enjoy.

The Naick Period

During the all too short interval between the decline of the Great Colas and the onslaught of the Muslims, the Pandyas made a few repairs and improvements, here and there, and added a few more shrines to the 'Mother' at Kudumiyamalai, Narttamalai, Puvalaikkudi etc. The Muslim drive into the Southern Tamil districts, which lasted a few decades during the 14th century resulted in troubled times, bringing back a renewal of the feudal system; it weakened such institutions as the Merchant Guilds and the Village Communities. In the absence of a stable government which can ensure peace, agriculture and commerce as well as culture and religion suffered. Under the titles of *Araiyars, Arasus* or *Nadalvars*, local chieftains succeeded like the Velirs of ancient Tamil poetry, in raising themselves from the position of clan or village headmen to that of potential rulers over part of the country or *Nād.* They founded new dynasties and fought one another, plundering their neighbours under the pretext of protecting their own peasantry. Recurring famine and epidemics completed the tale of woe in 1436, 1450 and 1451.[5] Those who survived had to migrate in search of a living. Villages became depopulated, and many towns lost for ever their importance, some of them surviving as mere hamlets today. With the abandonment of religious festivals which had for centuries attracted pilgrims and favoured trade, the Merchant Guilds died out. The Brahmins lost their benefices, and they too, left. The temples were uncared for.

When the Madura Naicks restored order and peace, they had to recruit Brahmins from their own Andhra Desa. But not a few among them showed more willingness for secular occupations than for the mere reciting of *mantras.* We find them in the service of the ruling princes at the various courts of the Pudukkottai Rayars and Tondamans,

[5] Radha Krishna, pp. 80 sqq, 110 and 111.

as well as in the service of the Madura overlords and their Southern Barons, the famous Poligars, as counsellors, ministers and even generals of armies on the battlefield.

With the loss of its rich patrons drawn from the merchant class, another institution, that of the Dancing Girls, became so impoverished that its members were driven to accepting service under temples. Gone were the days when Umaiyalvi Natchiyar, more commonly known as Periya Natchiyar, the daughter of another famous dancer at Kudimiyamalai, could not only offer the high sum of 73,000 gold coins for a temple land, but also add one more shrine to the Mother within the great temple precincts under the title of Malaiya Mangai or Soundara Nayagi. Was our Natchiyar by any chance a great-grand-daughter of the temple priest's sweet-heart of the legend, to whom the priest had the temerity to present the very garland of flowers destined for the deity ?

If Brahminism knew a renewal in the Pudukkottai country, as it did in the rest of the Southern districts, no new temples were built. New structures were simply added to the ancient ones, large sculptures, vast corridors and mandapams ; but the size and, at times, exaggerated realism of sculptural forms do not make up for the absence of religious inspiration. The sculptures of this period show unquestionable skill and power of expression, but they are the products of secular masters of the chisel and not of artists inspired by religion.

The quarrels and wars which followed the death of the last Madura Naick, in 1731, led to foreign invasion. Tamil Nad became the playfield of adventurers, both Indian and European, Chanda Sahib, the Mahrattas, the Nabob of Arcot, the Nizam of Hyderabad, Hyder Ali and his son Tippu Sultan, the English from Madras and the French from Pondicherry. These troubled days brought about a decline in the ascendency of Brahmanical Hinduism.

The Dravidian cult had not to come back into its own, as it had always been there since prehistoric days as the cult of the Mother, that of her companion Murugan-Siva-Aiyanar-Karuppan, the worship of ancestors and the rites of fertility. Though both deities and cults had been incorporated in Brahmanical temples, the people had gone on erecting altars of their own. Ancient cults die hard.

II. Village Religion

The 'Mother' and the 'Aiyanar'.

The Pudukkottai region provides typical examples of the survival of the sacred places, even when the religion itself has changed. Here as elsewhere in Tamil Nad, Brahmanical Hinduism has perpetuated the ancient altars by building its own shrines over the tombs of primitive Dravidian worthies. It has perpetuated, too, the cult of ancestor worship by adding it to its pantheon. The ancestral cult, far from declining under the pressure of Aryan concepts, cults and institutions, reacted by stamping its own mark deeply upon the new religions. So much so that it is well-nigh impossible to disentangle what is their own from what they have borrowed from the Dravidian cult.[6]

Our knowledge of Pudukkottai's past begins, as we have seen, with the dolmens and other burial forms found near tanks and water-courses. One would overlook the coincidence that the rocks and the hills in which the Jain monks settled, later on, are fertility elements in themselves, if the paintings of Sittannavasal were not here to show what part fertility elements played in the Jain tenets and symbols.

It is not fortuitous either that the Pallava shrines and the early Cola temples, as well as some others of later

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[6] See the scholarly work of N. V. Ramanayya, *Origin of South Indian Temples,* 1930.

periods, had no other symbol or object or worship than the Lingam with, or without, its Yoni pedestal. Scholars continue to discuss whether or not the Lingam in its most ancient forms in India was meant to represent a phallic symbol, as if it did matter much either way. A rock or stone, the more so a 'particular' stone that has been 'found', that is, one that has not actually been chosen but has revealed itself as 'sacred' because of its *hierophanic* quality, is as much a symbol of fertility and giver of life, a *lithic kratophany.*[7] Such are the so-called *suyambu,* or self-made, Lingams venerated in most ancient temples.

The primitive Lingams found in many shrines of Pudukkottai are perhaps of laterite but one cannot be certain as generations of Pujaris have, by anointing them with ghee and adorning them with sandal and vermilion, blackened them out of shape and recognition.

In the absence of natural springs in such a dry country as Pudukkottai, water itself became precious and sacred. On the slopes of the rockhills in which the Jains established their hermitages and the Saivites their shrines, water, in the shape of the smallest tarn, even a mere pool of rain-water gathered in a socket of the rock, becomes a 'mountain-lake', or a 'perennial spring'. The lotus that breeds in such pools, and much more still the 'immersed Lingams', that have been lowered into them for perennial bath in such hallowed waters, have acquired great sanctity.

A fertility concept again is contained in the legend of the Tiru Gokarnam temple in the Pudukkottai town, according to which the tutelar goddess of the Tondamans, the 'Celestial Cow Kamadenu', brings water daily from the Ganges to bathe the temple Lingam. The tarn upon the near-by hillock is said to have been cut out of the rock with her horn for the purpose of storing the sacred water. Has not this legend also inspired the common motif, so

[7] Eliade, pp. 191 *seq.*, and Leeuw, pp. 41 *seq.*

often carved in stone, of the sacred cow giving her teats to the Lingam as she would to her own calf, as also of the many representations of the 'Mother' with a cow's head and a woman's body ?

It is perhaps this same concept which inspired the people at Kudumiyamalai to place as a water-spout to their tank of rain-water a stone slab with a cow carved upon it. Do not the villagers of Ammanchattram in Narttamalai call their village tanks *Pal Urani* and *Karkandu Urani* (milk and sugar candy ponds) ? These two tanks provided drinking water to the Jain Monks who once dwelt in the eight natural caves at the summit of the rock-hill, and to the early men who had occupied them long before Jainism came south, the prehistoric men who buried their dead near the sacred waters of the tanks ? Such sacred places are so rich in past memories, so full of what the Romans call the *numen,* that people have ever been unconsciously attracted to them. One of the many heaps of stones that have rolled down from the rockhill mark the spot where a Sakkilici lost her life in such tragic and romantic circumstances that she was ranked among the *Paṭṭavals* or deified Mothers. It is no wonder, therefore, that the royal family of the Kolattur Tondamans chose to bury there their queens. Life and death are intimately connected, for in spite of death life endures.

If we were somewhat shocked to meet on the Melamalai, in this same hallowed range of Narttamalai, the tomb of a Muslim saint in the neighbourhood of Jain, early Saiva and Aiyanar shrines, it was not because of the presence of one more religious form, but because of the very incongruity of its modernity. As if to make up for this invasion of profane secularity among so much grandeur and so much sacredness, further on in the same hill, amidst a dense grove of trees is found a rustic open-air shrine to the Aiyanar. He dwells there in the company of the Mother and that of the Seven Virgins, his sisters, represented on small clay-tablets. In their long robes that

seem to have come out of a nursery book of fairy stories, they look charmingly like so many sleeping beauties. In this primeval shrine reminiscent of a Roman *Lucus*, one almost feels a pervading 'presence', for here are enshrined the simple faith and hope of agriculturist clans who for many centuries have been attracted by it.

The shrines to the Aiyanar that stand usually in the open, *sub diu* are commonly fenced with broken granite slabs which must have come from the nearest burial site, as also the small altars of that primitive faith, dolmen-like in shape. Villagers still erect small dolmens in front of their houses to serve as domestic altars. They are often used as henscoops for the poultry at night; both the profane and the sacred are usually rather mixed up, as are so many other South Indian symbols. But even if such miniature dolmens may not always serve their higher purpose, it is never lost sight of; upon such altars people do occasionally make vows and take their most binding oaths.

There is hardly any village without a shrine, not only to the Mother, but to the Aiyanar, and most villages in the Pudukkottai have several. One cannot mistake a shrine to the Aiyanar or to his double, Karuppanaswami; the many pottery horses, large and small, half of them in a state of crumbling, indicate these shrines. The traveller may falsely conclude that here is a dying, if not altogether dead, religion; the presence of so much pottery debris arises out of the great veneration in which whatever pertains to the Aiyanar is held. According to tradition, which is true of all ancient cults, nothing may be touched, and far less removed, which belongs to the sacred. The shrine to the Aiyanar may be renovated by the addition of some more clay horses or some more clay statues. Enormous horses or elephants in brick and lime—we have seen fine examples in stone too—may be erected, but all clay debris are carefully preserved as sacred relics.

In all shrines to the Aiyanar we met in our journeys through the Pudukkottai country, and we met a good many indeed in our wanderings from place to place, we found traces of recent worship, flowers that were just fading away and sacrificial hearths with their still fresh ashes. Here the puja and the common festive repast for a family, a clan or a village, had been recently prepared and shared.

By his shrines, as well as by the cult with which he is associated, the Aiyanar summarizes the inheritance from an ancestral past intimately connected with the cult of the Mother. Today he is still, indeed, the Mother's companion but her son—not her husband, Siva having usurped this role. Under his many names and titles as well as under his multifarious forms, the Aiyanar has remained an agricultural deity, inheriting or simply taking upon himself the Mother's concepts. Forms, titles and names may vary from village to village, and from one shrine to another even in the same village. Even so, we can trace him back to the days of ancient Tamil poetry when he was known as Murugan, the 'fragrant son of Kottavai', the victorious Mother. His shrines have mostly remained what they must have been in that forgotten past, open-air shrines, though there are temples in dressed stones dedicated to him in Pudukottah which go back to the beginning of the XVIIth or earlier century. Such is the one built by the Vallambars at Mangudi. Those 'Vallam Totta Vellalas', or *heretics* from Vallam in Tanjore, came and settled here, according to their Purana, rather than abandon their ancestral worship. They have so faithfully adhered to their Dravidian faith that they still call Saiva and Vaishnava forms of worship 'Devil-Dance', *Pēy-āṭṭam*; this latter term is perhaps equivalent to what we call heathen-worship, that is the dreaded rival faith. Devil-worship is as objectionable to the Tamil villager, at least in ordinary circumstances, as it is to the Christian missionary, though with a difference.

The importance of the Aiyanar did not escape the ever-awake Brahmins. He was given the Sanskrit name of *Sāstha* (Sāttan in Tamil, which has nothing in common with its Christian namesake). Sattan stands for a dignified master, and for God too, that is the One who governs, chastises and warns. The name has survived in *Sāttam-pillai* or the village master of pial schools. Having taken from the Mother her fertility rites, he is the object of the faith and veneration of young girls craving for a husband, and of the newly-wed, eager to be favoured with the gift of a child. Like those of the Mother, his shrines receive offerings of bangles, of plaited small sheaves of new rice, and bits of rags that may be found hanging from a *Pala* tree, of which the very name is suggestive of a 'babe'. The rags stand there as a symbol of swaddling clothes, and bespeak of newly-realized motherhood.

These attributes of fertility are symbolized under a variety of forms—Siva coming out of the Lingam, a Lingam with an entwining Naga, or the image of a boar ; the common fish relief ; the many Naga-stones placed upon raised platforms under a margosa-tree ; the presence of dancing scenes, or of 'temptation' tableaux, crudely suggestive, on the brick and lime structures of Aiyanar's horses or elephants. Apsaras or Yakshinis (Celestial Damsels, cloud-maidens, or 'Fertility Spirits') are traditional symbols in Indian religious art, but in some temples of the Madura Naick period, such symbolism is no longer mere 'provocative suggestiveness' or 'allegory' as in the Buddhists monuments of the Sanchi and Mathura schools, but, as Karl Khandalavala remarks referring to the similar scenes in the temple of the Sun at Konorak, 'the limit of sensuousness permissible in sound aesthetics'.[8] While in the temple of Minakshi at Madura, for instance, the temptation scene shows both art and restraint, the two larger than life size groups, which face one another in the hall of the

[8] Khandalavala, p. 33.

Kudimiyamalai temple are rather crude and frankly obscene in their realism. It may be art, but it is no longer religion ; it is also perhaps anti-clerical, representing as it does ascetics in their most unbridled lusty moods.

The Aiyanar is represented as single, as he should, with a youthful, almost childish, countenance inherited from Murugan as *Bālan* or *Kulandai* ; but he is also found like the grown-up Murugan in Brahmanical Hinduism, with two wives, Puranai and Pushkalai, or like the Tamil 'Pillaiyar' who, under the form of 'Kulandai Nayakkar' or young Ganesan, is shown at Kovilur with two shy young brides. In some places the Aiyanar is represented as *Pavadai Rayan,* the Princeling in petticoat, the typical Mother's child.

We ought not to be perplexed with these Protean forms of the Aiyanar, even if they involve a change, admixture or a confusion of sexes both in Brahmanical Hinduism and in the village cults. The male deity is, after all, but the double or the shadow of the Mother. as Siva himself is in his Ardhanari or hermaphrodite form. Does he not, at the Rock-temple in Tiruchirapalli, become *Tāyumānavar*, or the 'One who took also the functions of the Mother' ? Do not the priests as well as the male worshippers of the Aiyanar, come in many places in female attire ? The Mother-complex is so deeply engrained in the religion of the people that boys and men seem never to outgrow completely this early stage of childhood that made them one with their mother. One remains not only one's mother's child but as little dissimilar from her as nature allows.

But if the Aiyanar is at times independent of the Mother by inspiring a worship quite his own, he cannot easily cut off all relationship with the one that has given him his existence. The shrine to the Mother is never far-away from his, even if it is a mere mud hut with a thatched

roof and there will be also found another shrine, or at least the images, of the Seven Virgins, his sisters. These kind and indulgent Virgin-Mothers look like so many benevolent spinster-aunts, but maids who, like the Mother herself, participate in her maternity and care for the welfare and well-being of the village people. Thus does Dravidian religion duplicate and multiply its concepts and forms.

(To be concluded)

The Law of Thesawalamai

H. W. TAMBIAH.

THE ORIGINS OF THESAWALAMAI

Thesawalamai தேசவழமை literally meaning the "Customs of the country" has governed and still governs the destinies of nearly an eight hundred thousand Tamils in Ceylon. A critical analysis of some of its fundamental concepts supports the contention that there have been two waves of immigration, one from the west coast of India, which brought a people whose pattern of society was matrilineal, and whose customs were akin to the Marumakatthayam law and laws of the Mukkuwas of Ceylon, and another from the Coramandal coast which brought a band of people whose family organisation is based on the patrilineal pattern similar to the Tamils of Tirunelveli, Pondicherry, the Colombo Chettiars and the Vellalas of Puttalam.

THE THESAWALAMAI AND THE MARUMAKATTHAYAM LAW

The customary law of usages of the Malabar is the Marumakatthayam law, a system of law based on the matrilineal system of society, the principles of which are akin to the Aliyasanthana Law prevailing among the Canarese in India and the Mukkuwa Law of the Mukkuwas of Ceylon. Mayne in his monumental work on *Hindu Law* speaks of the "remarkable similarity" of the Malabar Marumakatthayam Law to the usages of the north of Ceylon as stated in the Thesawalamai.[1] As stated earlier further research on this subject reveals the fact that the Thesawalamai is a blend of the customary laws of the first

[1] See Mayne, *Hindu Law*, 7th Edition, page 3.

settlers who perhaps had a system of law which was very much akin to the Marumakatthayam law and the customary laws of the later colonists having their roots in a system of law prevailing among a patrilineal society. In order to appreciate these remarks it is necessary to explain some of the fundamental differences between the systems of customary law among a matrilineal society and a patrilineal family.

In a matrilineal society, the family unit consisted of all the descendants of the female line of one common female ancestor. Thus, the 'tarwad' of the Marumakatthayam and the 'kudi' of the Mukkuwa Law consisted of all the descendants of the female line of one common female ancestor. In such a pattern of society relationship could only be claimed through the female. The husband had no power over the ancestral lands. The manager of the family is usually the mother's brother but his ancestral property devolved not on his children but on his sister. The senior male in the family whether in the 'tarwad' or the 'kudi' became the head and manager of the family property. In Marumakatthayam Law he was known as the 'Karnavan'. Under the Aliyasanthana Law he is known as "Ejaman". The manager of the family unit looked after the ancestral property for the benefit of the members of the family and on his death his ancestral property did not devolve on his children but on his sisters, his undoubted relations.

In Malabar a custom arose which enabled the manager of the 'tarwad' to establish his own daughters in life providing dowries out of his acquired property. Each one of his daughters who has been so endowed started a separate family known as the 'tāivalillam' தாய்வழிஇல்லம் which, although it started an independent existence, was regarded as a branch of the 'tarwad' which has separated more or less from the parent's stock.[2] The institution set

[2] See Lewis Moore, *Malabar Law and Customs* (3rd Edition) p. 424.

out above has its counterpart in Mukkuwas Laws.[3] These principles peculiar to a matrilineal society are the outcome of a system of society where the eldest female was regarded as supreme in family circles, the marriage unions being not permanent, the male having a precarious existence. The members of the family looked upon the mother of the family as the undoubted relation through whom all descent could be claimed. The mother's brother has an important place in the family. Endowed with superior physical prowess, he looked after the property of his sister. Dr. Ehrenfels in his work on '*Mother Right in India*' has traced many matrilineal systems of society in India and Ceylon.

In a patrilineal system of society the eldest male was the manager of the family property, the females who were married out had no claims to the ancestral property of the family. The male members of the family had joint interest in the family property which only became separate on a partition. Mayne has shown that such customary usages exist in South India.

Alexander Johnstone in his despatches has collected many customary usages of the Tamils of Ceylon which are based on the patrilineal pattern. For example, the customary usages of the Colombo Chettiars and the Vellalas of the Puttalam District.[4] With indefatigable energy Le Sorge had collected the customary laws of the Pondicherry Tamils.[5] In Indian and Ceylon customary laws both patrilineal and matrilineal systems of society can be found. Referring to Indian customary law Ganapathi Iyer (after referring to the Dravidian usages) says[6] Mayne, expressed the same idea when he said[7] "I think it impossible to imagine that any body of usage could have obtained gene-

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3 See Britto, *Mukkuwa Law*, p. 571.
4 H. W. Tambiah, *Laws and Customs of the Tamils*.
5 *Pondicherry decisions*, by Le Sorge.
6 *Hindu Law* by Ganapathy Iyer, p. 36.
7 Mayne (9th Edition).

ral acceptance throughout India merely because it was included by Brahman writers or even because it was held by the Aryan tribes. In Southern India, at all events, it seems clear that neither Aryans or Brahmans ever settled in sufficient numbers to produce any such result." In support of his statement he takes three distinctive features of the Hindu Law, viz., the undivided family system, the law of inheritance and the practice of adoption, and shows how the early history of these branches of the law and their main features had nothing to do with Brahmanism.

Dr. Derrett, after referring to the *Dharmasastras*, says[8] "it is one of India's chief heirlooms. But its historical development is still a matter largely of conjecture since the date of the 'mula' viz., the 'sutras' of Gautama, Apastamba and others, is far from being settled. Conjectures and cross conjectures are many, and ingenious arguments erect a structure of relative priority or even absolute *termini ante quos* and *termini post quos* which seem to be based upon insubstantial arguments.

Probability is not however helpful, and after the work of Buhler, Jolly, Kane, Varadachariar, Rangaswami Aiyangar and Naresh Chandra Sen Gupta, a certain residium of knowledge may be said to exist, which can safely be applied for our present purpose. The presence of a rule in a later source does not, of course, lead us to believe that it did not exist for a very long period before that time ; nor is the absence of a rule in the earliest texts an indication necessarily that the rule was not perfectly well known, for the method of construction of the 'smrtis' did not require that every aspect of law should be dealt with, but only those aspects which might either be doubtful points of religious or moral law or be substantial difficulties in actual litigation. Topics which did not fall within these categories were thus omitted. Similarly in the

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8 *Origin of the Laws of the Kandyans* by J. D. M. Derrett in the University of Ceylon Review, Vol. 14, p. 108.

course of their commentaries the jurists of the classical period and of later periods who sought to mitigate or to improve upon their great masters, seldom adverted to matters which were perfectly well known to the populace unless they were necessary for the explanation of a passage in the text, and that only where a number of different interpretations could be placed upon the text so as to render a choice inevitable ".

Thus the existence of Indian customary law prior to the *Dharmasastras* and which practically influenced the latter has been recognised by scholars. Mayne has also shown that these Dravidian usages were not based on law but on the contrary many basic principles of Hindu Law as expounded in the *Dharmasastras* are based on these Dravidian usages. It is best to cite the words of Mayne on this matter.[9] " On the other hand, while I think that Brahmanical Law had been principally founded on non-Brahmanical customs, so I have little doubt that those customs have largely modified and supplemented by that law ". The study of these customary laws not only will be useful in constructing obscure passages in the *Dharmasastras* but also to fill in the gaps in ' smirthi law ' for a better appreciation of the Hindu law as a whole.[10]

The origin of Thesawalamai could be traced to the admixture of Indian Customary Law brought by the two waves of settlers referred to earlier who made the Jaffna Peninsula their home. When the contents of Thesawalamai are developed, an attempt will be made to show the co-existence of rules peculiar to both matrilineal and patrilineal systems of society. The rules of patriliny, although it has an independent origin from the *Dharmasastra,* received its blessings, but still did not succeed in ousting the rules of matriliny. As the late Mr. V. Coomara-

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9 Mayne's *Hindu Law,* 7th Edition, p. 11.

10 See Dr. Derrett's Article in the *Ceylon University Review,* Vol. 14, p. 109.

swamy has shown in a series of learned articles[11] the two bands of colonists made co-existence possible by the adoption of the rules applicable to both matrilineal and patrilineal systems of society.

Influences of Foreign systems of law on Thesawalamai.

When different systems of law come in contact with any particular customary law, they leave their imprint. The Thesawalamai was no exception. The German Historical School said that Law is essentially the product of natural forces associated with the *geist* of each particular people, and nothing is more representative of these evolutionary forces than the customs which are found to exist in each community, and which are indigenous as its flora and fauna. Recent researches have shown that this contention put forward by the German Historical School who apparently try to create a feeling of pseudo-nationalism is without any foundation. Dr. Allen states,[12] " Law is seldom pure blooded and national is a dangerous word to use of almost any legal institution ". It is well-known phenomena that customary laws change when they come in contact with foreign systems of law. The Thesawalamai has been modified from time to time as a result of the impact of Hindu Law, the Roman Dutch Law and even principles of English Law.

Influences of Hindu Law

The influence of Hindu Law as enunciated by the *Dharmasastras* has been very little in Thesawalamai. Sir Alexander Johnstone in his report to His Majesty's Government, referred to the Law of Thesawalamai and said as follows : " The Tamils—some of whom are Christians but most of them are worshippers of Vishnu or Siva—(independently of *Dharma Shastra,* the source of all Hindu Law, the Viguyan Ishuar, a law tract of great authority in the south of India and Videyanugger's Commentary on the

[11] See *Genesis and Development of Thesawalamai* by V. Coomaraswamy, *Hindu Organ,* dated 19-6-33, 6-7-33, and 27-10-33.
[12] *Law in the Making,* 2nd Edition, p. 51.

text of Parasara, a work of equal authority in the Mysore country) have a customary code of their own called Thesavalamai which, though it provides for many castes, leaves others to be decided according to the general principles of Hindu Law, as evidenced in the work to which I have just alluded.[13]

When the Portuguese, Dutch and English held sway over the Jaffna peninsula many leading caste Hindus became Christians (see Cleghorn's *Minutes*). Hence it is not surprising that the Hindu Law treatises supplemented the meagre provisions of the Thesawalamai. Thus, during the early British period it was found that *Dharmasastras* were used to supplement Thesawalamai.

To one unacquainted with Indian Customary Law, the Thesawalamai will appear in Tennyson's words as :—

" The lawless science of the law
That codeless myriad precedent
That wilderness of single instances
Through which a few, by wit or fortune led
May beat the pathway out of wealth and fame "

But to those who have traced Thesavalamai to its original roots it appears as a coherent system of law.

We shall estimate the influence of the law of *Dharmasastras* when we deal with the contents of Thesawalamai. At this juncture it is sufficient to state that a few principles are set out by the institutional writers on Hindu Law and Brahmanical practices have crept in supplanting the ancient usages of the Tamils.

Although it is generally believed that the law of Preemption was brought in by the Mohamedans who settled down in the Southern parts of India, it is submitted with respect that the Tamil customary laws had recognised preemption long before the Mogul invasion of Southern India. It was known to be Marumakatthayam Law.

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[13] *Katresan's Handbook on Thesawalamai*, pp. 1-4.

Following the decision of the Privy Council in an Indian case[14] the view has been expressed by some writers that pre-emption as known to Thesawalamai was brought in by the Muslim settlers of Jaffna (see Balsingam's *Laws of Ceylon*, VII, 1). The collection of Mohamedan usages codified by the Dutch and later by British (as found in the Mohamedan Code of 1806) do not mention the law of pre-emption. If pre-emption was known to the Muslim settlers of Ceylon, these collections would have contained some references to it. It is more probable that the law of pre-emption was brought by the first band of settlers from the Western coast of India who brought with them Marumakatthayam usages in its pristine purity.

CHANGES IN THE THESAWALAMAI DURING THE PORTUGESE AND DUTCH REGIME.

The Portuguese appear to have effected many changes in the law of Thesawalamai. This is clear from a passage in the Thesawalamai Code which reads as follows.[15] " But in process of time, and in consequence of several changes in Government, particularly those in the times of the Portugese when the Government was placed by the order of the King of Portugese in the hands of Don Philip Mascearenha several alterations were gradually made in the customs and usages according to the testimonials of the Modeliars. Thus, during the Portugese time the rule was adopted that dowry can be given out of Mudusam (ancestral property) although under the original customary law dowry could not be given out of the ancestral property of the husband. The Dutch have brought several changes in the law of Thesawalamai by express legislation.

The Preamble to the 76 orders states that these Orders were necessary to settle many points in dispute in matters affecting sales, Otti mortgages, money, hoarding, marriages, dowries etc. Space does not permit to point in detail the

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14 13, *Allahabad Law Journal*, p. 236.
15 Tes code Para 1.

far-reaching changes affected by these orders.[15a] As justification for the introduction of these orders the preamble states that these orders were framed in accordance with the customs of the Tamils. Despite this statement the Thesawalamai has been considerably changed by these orders. In this connection it is interesting to note that during the Dutch period that almost all the Tamils of Jaffna were forced to be Christians. This is evident from the writings of Baldeus. The Thesawalamai Code was mainly intended to apply to Christians with certain concessions to non-Christians. This is apparent from a perusal of paragraphs 1, 17, 18 of the Thesawalamai Code which gave certain rights to non-Christians who came over to Jaffna from India and married persons governed by Thesawalamai. These were not given equal rights as those governed by the Thesawalamai.

The Thesawalamai Code states that the Dutch legislated with the view of preventing parents from disposing of their property by sale or mortgage for the benefit of their married daughters or their children and to the detriment of their sons. The Dutch also laid down new rules pertaining to the giving of notice to persons who are entitled to the right of pre-emption. The Code says "Yet this mode of selling lands underwent an alteration afterwards in consequence of the good orders given on the subject given in the time of the old Commander Bloom (of blessed memory) as since those orders no sale of lands whatever has taken place until the intentions of such a sale have been published."

The Influence of Dutch Law

The Dutch Courts administered the Thesawalamai not only to the Tamils in the Jaffna Peninsula but also on the recommendation of Lt. Nagel to all the Tamils who were in

[15a] For a fuller discussion on the 76 orders see Muthukrishna on *Thesawalamai.*

the Wanni District. If the Thesawalamai was silent on any matter they applied the Dutch Law. Thus Pavilojeon, Commander of Jaffna Patnam (1665) ......in his instructions stated " The natives are governed according to the customs of the country, if these are clear and reasonable, otherwise according to our laws" It is interesting to investigate what Pavilojeon meant by the terms 'our laws'. The Dutch applied what are known as the Statutes of Batavia which was a collection of all the statutes passed by the Governor-General in Batavia, to their colonies in the East. According to Dr. Bissehep these statutes of Batavia by modifying and enlarging the jurisprudence of Holland sought to reconcile the Roman Dutch Law " with the spirit and temper of the natives". On the orders of Vandieman, Mr. Maetsuyekar collected these statutes under the designation of Old Statutes of Batavia. About a hundred years later, the Governor Vander Par instructed Jackraestein to make another collection known as the New Statute of Batavia. There is clear evidence that both the Old and New Statutes of Batavia were applied in Ceylon.[16] There is a residuary provision in the Statutes that in the case of " casus omisus", the Roman Dutch Law should be applied. The Roman Dutch Law is an admixture of the Roman Law and the Germanic customs and were developed by medieval writers of eminence such as Grotius, Voet, Bynkershock, Van Leeuwan, Vander Lindan and others who flourished from the middle of the 15th upto the end of the 17th century. This system of law is the residuary law of Ceylon even in modern times, and applies to all persons in the absence of customary laws and statute law or case law.[17]

The British following the rule in Compbell *vs.* Hall[18] adopted the policy of governing the people of Ceylon by their laws and customs. They set out their policy in the

16 See *Roman Dutch Law in Ceylon,* by H. W. Tambiah, *Law Students Magazine* (1951).
17 See Introduction to Roman-Dutch Law by R. W. Lee (5th Edition).
18 1744 Com. p. 244.

proclamation of 1799 by stating that they will govern the people according to the law. Although the statutes of Batavia were applied by the early English Judges in deciding civil matters they adopted the Roman Dutch Law of the institutional writers by a selective process. Some rules of Roman Dutch Law are found in the Thesawalamai Code prepared by the Dutch. After it was codified, the Roman Dutch Law had considerable influence in developing it during the British regime. Dalton J., in the case of Iya Mattayer *vs.* Kanapathipillai[19] said " having regard to the auspices under which the collection of laws and customs of Jaffna composed, and by whom it was composed, it is difficult to think that the provisions of Roman Dutch Law, did not exercise some influence, and that the idea of a partial community of goods as in the case of ' thediathettam ' may not have been strengthened by, if not derived from, the common law of the Dutch Government.

In the Thesawalamai Code itself many rules of Roman Dutch Law masquerade as principles of Thesawalamai. Thus the rule that the husband who has improved the wife's dowry property is not entitled to claim any compensation from the wife's heirs and the corresponding rule that if the wife improved the hereditary property of the husband she is not entitled to claim compensation, are found in the Roman Dutch Law. The principle of Thesawalamai that though gifts between husband and wife are null and void yet to the wife such gifts, if not revoked at the time of the donor, should be given effect to, is traceable to a similar rule in Roman Dutch Law which treated such gifts as a *donatio mortio causa* (see Van Leeuwan 424). The servitude that a neighbour is entitled to the fruits of what grows by itself on his neighbour trees has its parallel in Roman Dutch Law.[20] The greatest influence of the Roman Dutch Law on Thesawalamai is during the British period. Being the residuary Law of the land our courts

[19] (1928) 29 N.L.R. 301 at 307.
[20] See Grotius 224, 21 ; Herbert 209.

have not hesitated to apply principles of Roman Dutch Law whenever the provisions of the Thesawalamai are silent or obsolete.[21] Reviewing the principles set out in the above cases Scheneider, J., said[22] the principle deduced from the cases on these points may be summarised as follows: (1) the Roman Dutch Law, being the law generally applicable to the whole island, applied where the Thesawalamai is silent; (2) the Roman Dutch Law does not apply even where the Thesawalamai has no express provision if a question can be decided from general principles deduced from the Thesawalamai. From the Dutch period the Roman Dutch Law had been used to supplement the meagre provisions of the Thesawalamai.

The Influence of English Law

English Judges, trained in the principles of English Common Law and Equity have often sought to apply these principles for the clarification of concepts obscure to the Thesawalamai. Thus to give one example Bertram, C.J., found it difficult to express in juristic language the interest a man had in the acquired property of his wife. Although the rules of joint family system found in Indian customary law regarded the husband as the manager of the acquired property and gave him powers of alienation, the adoption of such rules would lead to hardships when property passes into the hands of *bona fide* purchases. Hence in Sellachi *vs.* Visvanathan Chetty,[23] Bertram, C.J., took the view that husband's interest in the wife's acquired property was in the nature of an equitable interest. After stating the principles of English Equity he said (at p. 99) "as I have said these principles *mutatis mutandis,* are capable of application to the conditions of the colony and to the circumstances of the present case."

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[21] The following cases Poothathamby *vs.* Myilvaganam (1897-8) 3 N.L.R. 42; Thevar *vs.* Sivakamipillai 1905, 1. Bal Reparts 201; Kuddiar *vs.* Sinnar 1914, 17 N.L.R. 243; Nagaratnam *vs.* Muthuthamby 1915, 18 N.L.R. 257.

[22] See Chanmugam *vs.* Kandia, 22 N.L.R., 221.

[23] 23 N.L.R. 97.

It is through statute law, many principles of common law found their way into the law of Thesawalamai. Thus, the marital rights between husband and wife, as contained in the Matrimonial Rights and Inheritance Ordinance of Jaffna, (an ordinance specially applicable to persons governed by Thesawalamai) principles of English Law have been introduced to alleviate the rigours of Roman Dutch Law by adapting the more humane equitable principles of English Law on marital rights.

SOURCES OF THESAWALAMAI

The Thesawalamai Code.

The reference to the Law of Thesawalamai in the instructions of Pavilojeon has already been mentioned. A short historical account of its codification may not be out of place. Hendri Zwardecroon, a Commander of Jaffnapatnam and afterwards Governor-General of Netherlands, India in his memoirs written for the guidance of the Council of Jaffnapatnam during his absence from Jaffna, stressed the necessity to codify the Thesawalamai so that the Company's servants who are "poor lawyers" may be guided to administer the law. As a knowledge of these matters cannot be obtained without careful study and experience which everyone will not take the trouble to acquire, he suggested that "it will be well if a concise digest be compiled according to the information supplied by the Chiefs and most impartial slaves "[24]. To accomplish this task he said that no one was better suited than Mr. Claaz Issaczs, Dissawe of Jaffna.[25] These suggestions were acted upon by the Governor Simons and Claaz Isaaczs completed the task of collecting these customs by the 30th of January 1707.

At the request of Claaz Isaacs, the Thesawalamai Code which was in the Dutch Language was translated into

[24] Memoirs of Hendri Zwardecroon, Ceylon Govt. Publication, pp. 40-50.
[25] An official similar to the Government Agent.

Tamil by Jan Pirus and three copies of the Tamil translation were sent to the twelve " leading Mudaliyars " who were selected for this purpose. The twelve " sensible Mudaliyars " affixed their signatures affirming the correctness of the translation subject to a dissent on one particular point. The Mudaliyars complained that it was customary for them to punish recalcitrant slaves but of late these slaves sought refuge under the Magistrate. " Such occurances " said the Mudaliyars " cannot but injure the character of the masters but at the same time render the slaves audacious ". They suggested therefore that the powers of punishment be given to them and further asked for a reduction of the amount which they had to pay when the slaves were conveyed to the fort to be put in chains for their misbehaviour. This unreasonable and undemocratic request was refused by Cornelius Joan Simons, Doctor of Laws and Governor of Ceylon, who confirmed the code of laws. On his directions, the Tamil translation of this Code was sent to the Land Court, (Land Road), which functioned in Jaffna for its guidance. In the musty records of the Ceylon Government Archives may be buried many decisions of the Dutch Courts embodying important principles of the Thesawalamai from the year 1707 to 1799.

The Thesawalamai during the British Period

When Ceylon was ceded to the British by the Dutch, the British, by the proclamation of 1799, guaranteed the people of this country to rule them according to their laws and institutions which existed under the Dutch Government. By a regulation dated 9-12-1806 it was enacted that the " Thesawalamai or the customs of the Malabars of the Province of Jaffna, as collected by the order of Governor Simons should be considered to be in full force and all questions between Malabar inhabitants should be decided according to the said customs ".

Reference has already been made to the discovery of Sir Alexander Johnstone that the people of Jaffna were

greatly attached to the Law of Thesawalamai, and treaties on Hindu Law were also used to supplement the provisions of Thesawalamai. Johnstone ordered a fresn translation of the Dutch Code to be made as he did not approve of the 'rude English' of the Dutch translator. The English translation was circulated to various Government officials in the Northern, Eastern and other provinces of Ceylon with the direction that they should report whether the customary usages of the Tamils in the areas in which they served were in accordance with the provisions of the Thesawalamai. In response to this request many replies were received which are of great interest to the legal historian. In these replies, the Agents of the Government set out categorically the customary usages of the Tamils in their respective districts indicating the points of difference whenever they differed from the provisions of the Thesawalamai Code. There was however a consensus of opinion that many of the Tamils of the Vellala caste in the Northern and Eastern Provinces were governed by this system of Law. Thereafter, the English translation was published as a statute and is found in the first edition of the Legislative Enactments in the unexpurgated form. Later editions of the Legislative Enactments have omitted the portions of the Thesawalamai Code which were abrogated in 1844. Many provisions of the Thesawalamai Code have become obsolete by disuse.

The Royal Commission appointed to suggest changes in the law of Thesawalamai recommended that the provisions of Thesawalamai governing adoption[26] should be repealed as they were obsolete. The Legal Draughtsman, Mr. Britto Mutunayagam sounded a note of caution and stated that it will be unsafe to state by legislative measures what portions of the Thesawalamai Code are obsolete and suggested that it will not be prudent to embark on a scheme of scientifically pruning the Code so as to leave it in hand

26 Part 2 of Tes Code and Part 7 Tes Code Pre-emption and 7 (2) Tes Code, sales of cattle.

so much of the law as today in force. Acting on the Roman Dutch Law that a legislative measure ceases to be law by disuse, our Courts have the power to declare any portion of the Thesawalamai Code obsolete. In order to obtain this declaration, the party who relies on it should lead evidence that any portion of the Code has fallen into disuse or that a contrary practice has developed which is in conflict with some provisions of the Thesawalamai Code.

SOURCES OF THE THESAWALAMAI

The principal source of Thesawalamai is the Dutch Code referred to earlier. The other sources are precedent, statute, law and custom.

Case Law :

Since 1799, Thesawalamai has been developed by case law. Mutukrishna has collected a valuable series of decisions on the Law of Thesawalamai. Some of these are decisions of the lower courts and other decisions of the Supreme Court. The former, although cannot be regarded as authoritative binding precedents, still help to discover some particular customary law which is not contained in the Thesawalamai Code. Some times they help in interpreting some obscure provision of the Thesawalamai Code.

Customary Law :

During the British regime and up to the present times, the Thesawalamai has been developed by precedents. The Supreme Court has laid down principles of Thesawalamai which are binding on the Courts. Some of their decisions have laid down new law, but custom has not ceased to be a source of law. Under the British regime evidence of experts was heard to settle a point of customary law, on which the Thesawalamai Code was either obscure or silent.[27] This practice led to abuses since an expert who

[27] The case of Vyrewendden *vs*. Vinassi ; Kander *vs*. Ramaswamy Mutukrishna p. 298.

is given a fee by a party often would distort the customary law to suit the interests of the party who had summoned him. Hence the Supreme Court discouraged the practice of sending the cases back for purposes of hearing expert evidence. (see Kanapathipillai Theivar *vs.* Valliammai, 4 Tambiah Reports 116). As stated earlier the tendency now is to apply the Roman Dutch Law whenever the Thesawalamai is silent. Still evidence of contrary usage could be led to show that a usage has sprung up which makes some particular provision of the Thesawalamai Code obsolete.[28]

Statutory Modifications

Three important statutes have greatly modified the old Thesawalamai. The Jaffna Matrimonial Rights and Inheritance Ordinances, Jaffna, not only brought about radical changes in the marital rights—regulating the relations between husband and wife but also contained rules governing intestate succession to suit the conditions of the disintegrating joint family system among the Tamils of Jaffna. It proceeded on the footing that ancestral property of the husband and the dowry of the wife belonged to each of them exclusively but the acquired property was vested equally in both spouses. It set out the rules of succession for these three types of property recognising the fundamental principles that property went to descendants, collaterals and descendants in order of priority. It also recognised the usufruct in favour of the surviving spouse over the properties of the minor children devolving from the deceased's father till they became majors or were given in marriage.

In agricultural society where the husband and wife laboured together in the garden or the fields a partnership in the acquired property was an equitable proposition. Due to the spread of education and the finding of avenues

28 Kander *vs.* Sinatchipillai 36 N.L.R. 362.

of employment in various spheres of life many Jaffna Tamils ceased to follow the pursuits of their forefathers and launched on professional careers. Hence there was a growing agitation that the spouse who was not the bread winner should not have any interest in the acquired property of the other spouse. The Thesawalamai Commission was appointed to look into these grievances and in particular, to suggest ways and means of improving the law of Thesawalamai. After many years of deliberation, the Commission sent their report (see Sessional Paper 3 of 1930) and a supplementary report.[29] They suggested far-reaching changes. They set out the provisions of the Thesawalamai Code which in their views was obsolete, the law of acquired property was revolutionised and new provisions were suggested to govern the law of pre-emption.

Many of these suggestions were implemented by the Legislature by the passing of the Jaffna Matrimonial Rights and Inheritance (Amendment) Ordinance of 1947. This statute, though obscure in parts and difficult of interpretation[30] has laid down new rules governing the rules of pre-emption and has brought about fundamental changes in the concept of acquired property.

From what has been said the Thesawalamai is a blend of the customary laws of the Tamils who migrated from the Western and Eastern coast of India to the Jaffna peninsula. It became moulded and changed by the impact of Hindu Laws, Roman Dutch Law and the English Law, after it was modified by precedent and statute law.

To find the law governing Thesawalamai, one has to go through the tangled growth of precedent and enactment remembering the important principle that the Thesawalamai Code might have become obsolete through disuse or

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[29] Sessional paper of Thesawalamai Commission of 1933.

[30] See changing concepts of Thediathettam, Laws and Customs of the Tamils of Ceylon by Dr. H. W. Tambiah, Q.C.

as a result of a later conflicting provision of some statute. The uncertainty of the law leads to many forsenic battles which enables the legal profession to reap a lucrative harvest. It is submitted that there should be a restatement of the Law of Thesawalamai in a statutory form made easily intelligible so that the layman may know his rights under this system of law.

Applicability of Thesawalamai

In dealing with the applicability of Thesawalamai distinction should be made between the part of Thesawalamai which applies only to "Malabar inhabitants of the Province of Jaffna" and that part which applied to all lands situated in the Province of Jaffna whoever may be the owner of the land.[31] It may be convenient to deal with the latter part first.

The form of usufructuary mortgage known as 'Otti', servitudes peculiar to Thesawalamai and pre-emption are matters which effect all lands situated in the "Provinces of Jaffna" creating *Jura in Re Aliena.* These rights, being attached to land, apply to all lands in this area, whether owned by a Tamil, Sinhalese or a foreigner and do not require further consideration.

The Law of Thesawalamai pertaining to subjects like the matrimonial rights of spouses, guardianship, inheritance are matters that apply only to that category of persons who come under the description of "Malabar Inhabitants of the Province of Jaffna" and to their wives during the period of coverture. The Thesawalamai Regulations stated that Thesawalamai applied between the Malabar Inhabitants of the Province of Jaffna or where the defendants answered this description.

The enigmatic phrase "Malabar Inhabitants of the Province of Jaffna" has been the subject matter of various decisions of our Courts. The ingenuity and the subtility

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[31] Suppiah *vs.* Tambiah, 7 N.L.R., 15.

of the legal fraternity have suggested various interpretations, some fanciful, others attractive though not sound, and yet others which are sound.

It was contended that the word "Malabar" was used not only by the British but also by the Dutch to describe a close class Tamils, who were settled down in the Northern Province of Ceylon at the time Ceylon was ceded to Britain, and their descendants, and perhaps to immigrants from the Malabar district in India and not to others although they may be fully fledged Tamils who have made Jaffna their permanent home. This contention was rejected and it was held that the Thesawalamai applies to all Tamils who make the Province of Jaffna their home.

Meaning of the term 'Inhabitants of the Province of Jaffna'

As observed earlier, Thesawalamai does not apply to all persons who come under the ethnic group described as Jaffna Tamils but only to those who regarded the Province of Jaffna as their permanent home. The vexed question, what is meant by a permanent home, has been the bone of contention in many forsenic battles in the Courts of Ceylon. Many Jaffna Tamils have left their homeland and sought pastures anew to other parts of Ceylon outside the Northern Province and still others are settled down in distant lands like Malaya, India and other parts of the world. The question whether the Thesawalamai applies to them depends on whether they regard themselves as permanent inhabitants of the Province of Jaffna, a geographical unit which we shall discuss later. If this question is answered in the affirmative then they are governed by Thesawalamai. Since the Thesawalamai is a particular system of law the onus is on the party who asserts that this system of law applied to a particular person in derogation to the general law of the Island.[32]

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[32] Somasundaram *vs.* Charawanamuttu 1942, 44 N.L.R., p. 1; (1951) Kandiah *vs.* Saraswathy 54 N.L.R. 137.

The Thesawalamai does not apply to Jaffna Tamils who had their permanent home outside Jaffna. Thus in *Spencer vs. Rajaratnam*[33] it was held that the Thesawalamai did not apply to a Jaffna Tamil who contracted an alliance with a Jaffna Tamil in Jaffna but who had his permanent home in Colombo at the time of his marriage. Sometimes it was held that it did not apply to a Jaffna Tamil who, at the time of his marriage had settled down at Chilaw[34] or Colombo.[35] The decision in the Savudranayagam's case[36] is difficult to understand. In this case, a Colombo Chetty who settled down in Jaffna before his marriage and who married a Jaffna Tamil lady was held not to be governed by Thesawalamai. Dr. Paul Pieris who heard this case in the District Court, held that Mr. Britto was not a Tamil. He said that Colombo Chetties had mingled themselves so much that it is difficult to say to which community they belong. The Supreme Court affirmed this finding of facts. It is submitted that this decision may be right so far as the facts go but it cannot be cited for the proposition that in a case where a Colombo Chetty has made the Northern Province of Ceylon as his permanent home he is not governed by Thesawalamai.

The Thesawalamai does not apply to Jaffna Tamils who had their permanent home outside the Province of Jaffna. Thus in *Spencer vs. Rajaratnam*[37] it was held that the Thesawalamai does not apply to a Jaffna Tamil who had settled down at Chilaw and in *Somasunderampillai vs. Charavanamuttu*[38] the view was taken that it did not apply to a Jaffna Tamil who contracted an alliance with a Jaffna Tamil in Jaffna but who had his permanent home in Colombo at the time of his marriage.

In considering the question whether the Thesawalamai applies to a married man, the crucial question is to deter-

[33] Spencer *vs.* Rajaratnam, 16 N.L.R. 321.
[34] Fernando *vs.* Proctor, 12 N.L.R. or
[35] Colombo Spencer *vs.* Rajaratnam, 16 N.L.R. 321.
[36] 1913, 20 N.L.R. 274.
[37] 16 N.L.R. 321.
[38] 1942, 44 N.L.R. 1.

mine whether the permanent home was the Northern Province of Ceylon at the time of marriage.[39] If a husband had his permanent home outside the Province of Jaffna at the time of marriage the Thesawalamai does not apply to him.

THE PROVINCE OF JAFFNA

The precise geographical limits of the Province of Jaffna, an expression used in the Regulation that declared Thesawalamai to be in force to the Malabar Inhabitants of the said area, was at one time a matter of conjecture. As stated earlier, the Thesawalamai was only applied to Tamils who lived in the Province of Jaffna and its neighbouring islands. On Lt. Commander Nagel's suggestions it was applied to the Wanni Districts. Before the Thesawalamai was applied to this area of the Vannias (a warrior caste among the Tamils, see Raghavan) the laws and customs of the Vannias were applied to this area.[40]

Once the Dutch applied the Thesawalamai to the Wanni Districts, its application spread to the Vellala Tamils of the Eastern Province. From the despatches of Sir Alexander Johnstone it is clear that it applied with slight modifications to all Tamils (other than the Mukkuwas, Colombo Chettis and the Parawas) who lived in the North, Eastern and North Western Provinces of Ceylon.

Although the Supreme Court decided that the Thesawalamai applied to the Tamils of the Wannar Districts[41] the view was taken that it does not apply to the Tamils of the Eastern Province. In taking the view that the Thesawalamai does not apply to the Tamils of the Eastern Province, the Supreme Court relied on the Report of Grenier who equated the term 'the Province of Jaffna' to the

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39 See Velupillai *vs.* Sivakamipillai (1910) 13 N.L.R. 74 and Somasundaram Pillai *vs.* V. Charavanamuttu (1942) 44 N.L.R. 1.

40 For this collection see *The Laws and Customs of Ceylon* by Dr. H. W. Tambiah.

41 Wellapulla *vs.* Sitampalam 1872-76 Ram Rep. p. 114.

'Northern Provinces of Ceylon', a premise which is not warranted and not supported by the despatches of Sir Alexander Johnstone. The Royal Commission appointed to report on Thesawalamai, on incorrect premises stated that the Province of Jaffna comprised more or less of the present Northern Province. The Matrimonial Rights and Inheritance Ordinance and the Married Women's Properties Ordinance, by enacting that these ordinances do not apply to Tamils of the Northern Province by necessary implications, made it applicable to Tamils of other parts of Ceylon. Hence any doubts and conjectures are now settled by statute and the personal part of Thesawalamai applies, only to the Tamils of the Northern Province of Jaffna.

To sum up, the personal part of Thesawalamai applies to all Tamils having Ceylon domicile whose permanent home is in the Northern Province of Ceylon.

News and Notes

SIR JOHN MARSHALL DEAD

The death was announced at London on 18th August, 1958 of Sir John Hubert Marshall, Director-General of Archaeology in India from 1902 to 1931. He was 82.

Born on 19th March, 1876 in Chester, Sir John Hubert Marshall had a brilliant academic career. He had his education at Dulwich and King's College, Cambridge. As a Cambridge scholar, he secured a first class in Classical Tripos. He was also a Birdwood Memorial Gold Medallist of the Royal Society of Arts as well as a Triennial Gold Medallist of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain. His publications include "A Guide to Sanchi", "A Guide to Taxila", "Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilisation" and the "Buddhist Art of Gandhara". He was also editor and part author of "Annual Reports of Archaeological Survey of India".

—*The Hindu.*

RESEARCH IN TAMIL

Inaugurating the Mylai Tamil Sangham on 17th August, 1958 Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar pleaded for giving active encouragement to research in Tamil. He expressed the hope that the starting of the Sangham would not only result in an active pursuit of literary and artistic glories of the South, but would also lead to archaeological and literary research to rediscover their ancient glory.

Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar formally released on the occasion the popular editions of *Ahananooru* and *Purananooru* and *Pattum Thogaiyum* (a glossary and index) published

by Mr. S. Rajam of the Murray and Company. These three publications complete a series of ten volumes of Sangham literature, the publication of which began in 1955.

Mr. P. V. Rajamannar, Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, who participated in the function, referred to the greatness of the ancient Tamil classics and said that the main duty of the Sangham and other similar organisations should be the publication of popular editions of some of these classics in order to bring out the beauty of the language for the benefit of the masses.

The Srinivasa Sastri Hall in Mylapore, where the function was held, was packed with Tamil scholars and lovers of Tamil. The proceedings commenced with a prayer song from *Purananooru* by Mr. D. Pasupathi.

Mr. T. M. Krishnaswami Aiyar, President of the Sangham at the outset, welcomed the gathering.

Inaugurating the Sangham, Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar said that Mylapore had been associated with culture for many centuries and the function marked only the revival or renaissance of a Tamil Sangham in that place. He explained the cultural importance of Tamil Nad and the greatness of Tamil literature, and said that he could say that, for expression and for complete merger of the individual with the Supreme Soul there were no poems in the world, which could equal Tamil lyrics. Especially in the matter of Saiva Siddhanta one found a clarity of thought and a directness of approach, which probably transcended many parallel works in Sanskrit literature. But, he remarked, it was futile and idle to contrast one Indian language with another, particularly two ancient languages like Sanskrit and Tamil. He said that these controversies were dangerous and pernicious and added that these sister languages had helped each other and there had been no jealousy between them from the beginning. But there had been one matter in which the Tamil genius

and Tamil literature had been perhaps unique in Eastern life and that was the fullness of existence which Tamil literature had envisaged and encouraged, he observed.

Anthologies of Verses

Referring to *Ahananooru* and *Purananooru*, the publications of which were released on the occasion, Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar said that it would be useful to note that the earliest books they had were anthologies of previous verses. which meant that many generations should have elapsed before these anthologies could be compiled. It showed that the original Sangham literature was really anterior to these works (the publications of which were released today) and these might be said to be modern reductions of ancient poems. The Tamil poet did not turn his face away from the facts, the necessities and the irreplaceable demands of human nature and these poems dealt with all aspects of human life, he said. They also related to the active love and encouragement of literature by the various kingdoms and patrons, which showed that in the past there was a recognition of the value of literature in the sum total of human happiness. The glossary and index volume that was being released contained a list of important words and authors of Sangham literature, quotable passages from that literature and also a kind of an extract of customs and manners of those days. He thought that the book of research was only a symbol of the things that should have to come. What was needed was not mere talking of the greatness of Tamil, but active encouragement of research, he said.

Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar, in conclusion, said that the South had an ancient, hoary and worthwhile civilisation and that culture was part of the life of the country here at times, when culture was not very much in vogue elsewhere. Even now there were places like Kancheepuram, where excavations by the Archaeological Department, if

carried out, would probably bring to light most wonderful specimens of their culture. He hoped that the Tamil Sangham would take steps to impress upon the Government the need for rediscovering the glory and monuments of the past, for preserving the literary monuments of the present and to work for the rehabilitation and regeneration of the Tamil literature and culture of the future.

Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar then presented to Mr. Rajamannar the volumes of *Ahananooru*, *Purananooru* and *Pattum Thogaiyum* to mark the release of the publications.

Addressing the gathering, Mr. Rajamannar said that the more one came to know of a literature, particularly an ancient literature like Tamil, the more the extent of one's ignorance became manifest. The ancient Tamil classics, he said, contained marvellous specimens of Indian poetry. The great poets of the past had realised the fullness of life and that was why they found in their ancient classics of any language the poets dealing with even subjects like sex. However, the way in which they dealt with sex was different from what was found in the journals, which had rapid sales now. Apart from their cultural value, their ancient classics had even a lesson to the modern Government. These poems brought home to them that the monarchs and noblemen of the past had always taken pride in extending their patronage to poets. They reminded the Governments, whether it be a monarchy or a republican form of Government—of their duty in regard to poets, he said.

Mr. T. P. Meenakshisundaram said that the ancient Tamil classics dealt with all aspects of human life and they belonged not only to the people of Tamil Nad, but to the entire humanity. It was their duty to make them known to the people outside and he commended the efforts made in this direction. He, however, pointed out that in the matter of preparing an exhaustive index of all ancient works in Tamil, there was duplication of effort by a number

of agencies, and suggested that steps should be taken to co-ordinate their work.

Mr. M. P. Sivagnana Gramani said that revival of culture should naturally follow political independence and emphasised that steps should be taken in that direction. He spoke of the valuable information contained in the Tamil classics and requested the people of Tamil Nad to translate into practice the high ideals contained in them, particularly in *Purananooru.*

Srimathi Soundaram Kailasam proposed a vote of thanks.

—*The Hindu,* August 19, 1958.

KATTABOMMAN DAY CELEBRATED

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari stated here that the main object in observing the days of national heroes like Kattabomman was to preserve the hard-won freedom and appealed to the people of Tamil Nad not to indulge in controversy as to whether Kattabomman was a Tamilian or an Andhra, but get inspiration from his struggle against foreign rule.

Mr. Rajagopalachari, who addressed a meeting organised by the Madras District Tamil Arasu Kazhagam on 16th October, 1958 to celebrate the Kattabomman Day at St. Mary's Hall, George Town, spoke in Tamil. He said that, though he was not well, he had decided to participate in the meeting and pay his homage to Kattabomman, who raised a revolt against British rule in Tamil Nad. Before him, Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan had also fought the British. It was their duty to pay their homage to all those who had contributed so much to the freedom struggle and the main object in celebrating the anniversaries of those patriots was to pay the respect and homage due to those who fought and died for freedom in the early days.

In this connection, Mr. Rajagopalachari touched on the controversy in Tamil Nad referred to by previous speakers as to whether Kattabomman was a Tamilian or an Andhra. He pointed out that many Andhras had migrated to Tamil Nad and settled in this part of the country. They had not only made Tamil their mother-tongue, but had contributed a great share to the enrichment of that language. So, could they say that because those people came from Andhra, they were not Tamilians ? He also deprecated the tendency to decry the achievements of one patriot by extolling another. He advised admiration of both or as many as came up for notice.

The life of Kattabomman, Mr. Rajagopalachari said, had been popularised among the villagers after his death through folk songs during the past 150 years or so. It was because they were under foreign domination, that they were not able to celebrate their martyrdom more elaborately. But now that they had become independent, they were justly paying their homage by celebrating his day and he expressed the hope that people would pay their homage to the departed patriots without indulging in controversies.

COURSES IN TAMIL AND TELUGU IN ALIGARH

Courses of instruction in Tamil and Telugu will be started at the Aligarh University from the next academic year, Col. B. H. Zaidi, Vice-Chancellor of the University told P.T.I. on 27th October, 1958.

He said that the Government of India and the University Grants Commission had approved of the proposal and sanctioned an initial grant.

" I am hoping for a good response from North Indian students to these courses," Col. Zaidi said.

Col. Zaidi said that India's emotional integration could be brought about only when the people of the North also learned South Indian languages which possessed a glorious heritage. The Aligarh University proposed to invite top Tamil aind Telugu scholars to lecture to North Indian students about the linguistic culture of the South.

A large number of students from South India were now joining the Aligarh University, the largest contingent being from Kerala. There was a growing demand for teaching Southern languages from those students too.

—*The Hindu.*

NEW FINDS CONFIRM EXTENSIVE AREA COVERED BY THE INDUS VALLEY CULTURE

A small mound in obscure Lothal, a village in Ahmedabad District, is today attracting the attention of archaeologists as the only site in India revealing the mature, urban civilisation which flourished in the Indus Valley, more than 4,000 years ago.

Besides the usual types of Harappa antiquities, such as seals, earnthen and bronze vessels and stone blades and weights, excavations have yielded terracotta seal impresses and a distinct ceramic ware known as Black and Red ware. An important structure unearthed was a large kiln built on a platform. A hoard of seventy-five terracotta seal impresses bore images of the Indus script and animal figures. Seal impresses have not been found either at Harappa or Mohenjo-Daro and their occurrence at Lothal is attributed to their probable use on packages of merchandise exported thence. Lothal is believed to have been a flourishing port 4,000 years ago and probably had maritime contacts with Egypt, Mesopotamia, Crete and Sumer.

The arts of painting, clay-modelling, etching, engraving, and metal-casting were highly developed, while the exquisite filigree work of jewellers 4,000 years ago still

commands attention. A necklace of microscopic gold and steatite beads has been found. Lothal has revealed, further, beautifully finished beads of topaz, agate, cornelian, jasper, sell, ivory and faience. The art of painting earthen vessels was also highly developed, with ingenious motifs. The colour scheme was usually black over red, or chocolate over buff. As at Mohenjo-Daro, the entire vessel surface was often painted and the designs repeated. The peacock, deer, stag, snake, sparrow, pipal leaf and palm tree are some of the naturalistic designs painted on Lothal vessels.

—*Illustrated Weekly of India*, September 14, 1958.

ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING OF THE ACADEMY OF TAMIL CULTURE, MADRAS

The fourth Annual General Body Meeting of the Academy of Tamil Culture was held at the Teachers' College Lecture Hall, Saidapet on the 31st August, 1958 and the following office-bearers were elected for the year 1958-1959.

President :

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice N. Somasundaram.

Vice-Presidents :

Mr. Karumuthu Thiagarajan Chettiar,
The Hon'ble Mr. Justice V. Subramaniam,
Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai, and
Mr. A. Subbiah.

Hony. Secretaries :

Mr. K. Kodandapani Pillai, and
Mr. C. Amritaganesan.

Hony. Treasurers :

Mr. V. S. Thyagaraja Mudaliar, and
Prof. V. Shanmugasundaram.

Following the business meeting there was a public meeting attended by several Tamil scholars, Professors and students of B.T. College. Dr. M. Varadarajan, Head of the Department of Tamil, Pachaiyappa's College, presided over the meeting. In his introductory remarks Dr. Varadarajan said that 'the greatness of Tamil language and literature was recognised by many foreign research scholars. While the Tamils did not want to boast themselves as the inheritors of a language superior to others, an enquiring mind would not raise the controversy of a language being high or low, but would let the truth speak for itself. Pleading for the promotion of research in the Tamil language and literature, he urged that lovers of the language should also help the growth of that language by translating the ancient works therein in other languages, especially in English.'

Mr. K. Ramalingam, Special Officer for the Implementation of the Madras State Official Language (Tamil) Act, said that 'the strength of a language did not depend upon absorption of words from other languages but on making the language itself easily understood by the people. In this context he felt the need for maintaining a certain amount of uniformity in the use of words which were differently spoken in different regions. If instead they allowed the use of Tamil words as used in different regions of Tamilnad itself for purposes of official use, it would lead to a division of Tamilnad into three different regions if not more, and it would be difficult to carry on the administration in the Tamil language.'

Mr. P. Thirugnanasambandam, Professor of Sanskrit, Presidency College who then addressed the gathering stressing on the need for a study of the Tamil language from the comparative and historical point of view observed as follows :

A study of the Tamil language from the comparative angle would mean a study of Tamil of a particular

era with the corresponding cognate languages of the Dravidian family and Sanskrit. The other approach would be historical in character whereby we study the development of Tamil from one era to another, to wit, the language of the Sangham epoch may be compared with the language of the period of Kambar and again with the language of the modern era. This approach would enable us to understand how the language has progressed, how certain forms and expressions have either changed in their complexion and content or disappeared and how certain others have come into being, what influences were at work in bringing about these changes, etc. He made reference to the pioneering efforts made by savants like Dr. Caldwell in the past and Dr. Kamil Zvelebil in the present day in this direction and stressed the need for scholars in the language to break new ground in this field on the scientific lines developed in the West by adopting objective methods and tests. He also referred to the vast strides made in this direction in regard to Sanskrit which attracted the attention of a host of philologists all over Europe for nearly two centuries as Sanskrit happened to be an Indo-European language and stressed the need for collaboration among the linguists of Dravidian languages if a comparative grammar of the Dravidian languages is to be attempted as it ought to be on similar lines.

He also pointed out the plausibility of the theory held by Mr. T. Burrow. Professor of Sanskrit, University of Oxford and others regarding the existence of the Dravidian and Austric languages prior to the advent of the Aryans and the possible interchange of ideas and expressions between that old Dravidian language then in vogue in North India and Sanskrit even during the Vedic period. In this connection, he observed that borrowing from one language to another can never be an one-way traffic so long as people speaking two different languages have got to live together and that in the same manner as Tamil has borrowed several expressions, ideas and forms from

Sanskrit in some measure at one period or another, so in Sanskrit several ideas, expressions and forms must have crept in from the Dravidian and other languages spoken in the North before the former was pushed down south. In this connection he cited certain words like 'elam' in Tamil and Sanskrit meaning 'cardamom', 'kalam' in Tamil and 'khala' in Sanskrit meaning 'threshing floor', 'pandu' meaning 'ripen' in Telugu and 'Pandita' in Sanskrit meaning 'ripe in wisdom', etc. given by Prof. Burrow in his book "The Sanskrit Language".

Mr. M. R. Perumal who spoke next said:

Tamilians are bound to be happy when they review the huge strides that have been made in the development of Tamil as a modern language. It has become the first language for study in the Secondary schools. Time was when a student could pass the S.S.L.C. examination without studying Tamil as a language in the six years of the Secondary school course. But today, the study of Tamil has been made compulsory in the Secondary school curriculum. Consequent on the importance given to Tamil in the Secondary school, the teachers of Tamil also have risen in status and their emoluments too have been increased. Tamil has become the medium of instruction in the Secondary schools replacing English. The above changes have inevitably led to the adoption of Tamil as the official language of the State. This is a very important and very significant change. India cannot be said to have achieved complete independence from foreign rule unless and until the language of administration in every State of the Union is the same as the language of the people of that State.

The above developments have taken place as a result of Governmental action. Let us now see what have been the achievements in the private sector, if I may divide the achievements as those of the public sector and those of the private sector. Recent years have seen the establishment of a large number of newspapers and periodicals in

Tamil and some of them enjoy a very large circulation. There are a number of writers in Tamil whose essays, short stories, novels and poems are really good and can stand comparison with those of writers in other modern languages. This should not however blind us to the defects found in the language written by some of the so-called renaissance writers. They have had no grounding in the grammar and idiom of the language with the result that they write a sort of language which is completely alien to the genius of Tamil which has had a continuous and continuing tradition for about three thousand years. The newspapers and magazines are the greatest offenders in this respect. It is to be hoped however that the journalists will, in the not distant future, realise the need for a thorough grounding in the grammar and idiom of the language and will also have the necessary attachment to the purity and chastity of the language so that they will desist from consciously or unconsciously debasing the language by the use of words, phrases and turns of expression which are either incorrect or belong to other languages.

It is no doubt necessary to introduce Tamil classics to world audiences by translating Tamil works into English and other modern languages. But even this is not half as important as the urgent need to adopt Tamil as the medium of instruction in the University classes. I do realise that there are certain difficulties which have to be overcome before Tamil can take the place of English as the medium of education in the University. But, to my mind, difficulties are there only to be overcome and it is absolutely necessary to take immediate steps to develop Tamil to suit the needs of higher education. Tamil cannot be said to have attained its full stature unless and until it becomes the medium of education in colleges.

The first step in this direction is to adopt Tamil as the medium of instruction in Training Colleges which prepare teachers for Secondary schools. I am proud to say that the Teachers' College, Saidapet has taken the lead

in the matter and is teaching the optional subjects of the B.T. course in Tamil. Half a dozen other colleges in the State have followed this example of the Saidapet college. The necessary technical terms have been prepared and some books are also being written to facilitate the early adoption of the Tamil medium for teaching the general subjects of the B.T. course also.

The Chairman, in his concluding remarks, urged the need for unity and sustained effort on the part of the Tamils to preserve and propagate the language which had stood the test of time. The decadence of Tamil in the recent past, he said, was due to the fact that writers in the language did not devote thought and attention to production of books imparting knowledge to the readers but were content to produce books appealing to the emotions. He felt that the replacement of English by Hindi would lead to the extinction of the place for Tamil. The "Quit India" movement, he said, referred to the quitting of the English people and not of their language which had a special place in the development of cultural unity and should be encouraged by the establishment of separate colleges while making Tamil the medium of instruction in this region.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. K. Kodandapani Pillai.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

AN APPRECIATION OF OUR JOURNAL— "TAMIL CULTURE"

" The articles are at once scholarly and well informed, and make satisfying reading. The Rev. Dr. Thani Nayagam may well be proud of having brought into being so worthy a journal to serve so worthy a cause. May long life and prosperity attend it."

M. S. H. THOMPSON,
14, Norman Avenue, Twickenham, Middlesex, England.

WHAT A PROFESSOR OF SANSKRIT IN A WESTERN UNIVERSITY THINKS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF TAMIL LITERATURE :

Writing to the Chief Editor, *Tamil Culture,* on September 8, 1958, Mr. F. B. J. Kuiper, Professor of Sanskrit in the Leiden University, says :

" Since many years I am trying to introduce the study of Tamil besides that of Sanskrit in the Leiden University, because I am convinced that a knowledge of Tamil literature is indispensable for a right evaluation of the Indian civilisation."

Transliteration of Tamil Phonemes* into English

VOWELS

அ	—	a	(as in among)
ஆ	—	a:	(,, calm)
இ	—	i	(,, sit)
ஈ	—	i:	(,, machine)
உ	—	u	(,, full)
ஊ	—	u:	(,, rule)
எ	—	e	(,, fed)
ஏ	—	e:	(,, able)
ஐ	—	ai	(,, aisle)
ஒ	—	o	(,, opinion)
ஓ	—	o:	(,, opium)
ஔ	—	au	(,, now)

CONSONANTS

				Hints re: articulation
Hard[1]	க	—	k	(as in king, angle, alhambra)
(Plosive)	ச	—	c	(,, church, angel, calcium)
	ட	—	t:	(,, card ?)....Retroflex - articulate with **blade** of tongue.
	த	—	th	(,, threat, this, thick)....dental.
	ப	—	p	(,, pipe, amber)
	ற	—	t	(,, atlas, sunday, arrears)..Retroflex-articulate with **tip** of tongue.
Soft	ங	—	ng	(,, sing)....velar n
(Nasal)	ஞ	—	nj	(,, angel)....palatal n
	ண	—	n:	(,, urn?)....Retroflex n - articulate with **blade** of tongue.
	ந	—	nh	(,, anthem)....dental n
	ம	—	m	(,, mate)
	ன	—	n	(,, enter)....Retroflex n - articulate with **tip** of tongue.
Medium	ய	—	y	(,, yard)
(non-nasal	ர	—	r	(,, red)
continuant)	ல	—	l	(,, leave)....Alveolar l - articulate with **tip** of tongue.
	வ	—	v	(,, very)
	ழ	—	l·	(,, ?)....Retroflex l - articulate with **blade** of tongue.
	ள	—	l:	(,, hurl)....Alveolar l - articulate with **blade** of tongue.
Auxiliary[2] (ஆய்தம்)	ஃ	—	x	(,, ahead)

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* The Tamil phonemes may for practical purposes be treated as having single allophones only, except in the case of the hard consonants which have four allophones each, as shown in note 1 on the reverse.

1. The Phonemes, classified as *hard,* have normally an *unaspirated unvoiced* value but acquire the following modified values if preceded by a consonant:—

(a) a *slightly aspirated* unvoiced value, if preceded by a *plosive or hard consonant.*

e.g., பக்கம் - is pronounced pak**kh**am, not pak**k**am

(b) an unaspirated but *voiced* value, if preceded by a *nasal or soft consonant*:—

e.g., பங்கம் - is pronounced pangam, not pankam
பஞ்சம் - „ panjam, not pancam,

(c) a *fricative* value if preceded by a *non-nasal continuant or medium consonant or by the auxiliary consonant.*

e.g., பல்கலை becomes pal**h**alai not palkalai
எஃகு „ ehhu not exku

NOTE.—In most present day dialects, the plosive assumes a fricative —sometimes a voiced—value after a vowel also, except in the case of t : which retains its normal unaspirated, unvoiced value even after avowel.

2. The value of this *auxiliary* phoneme, which must *always* be followed by a hard consonant, was variable during the time of Tholkappiam; it acquired a phonetic value identical with that of the following hard consonant, vide 1 (c) above,

e.g., எஃகு became ehhu

Later its value became fixed as h, irrespective of the following consonant.

Note. (i) With a view to keep down transliteration to the minimum it is suggested that, in the case of Tamil words which are already in free use in English (e.g., Tamil=Thamil), or where it is unnecessary to indicate the **exact** pronunciation, accurate transliteration need not be resorted to. In the case of proper names etc., which occur more than once in the same article, the transliteration need be shown only once in brackets side by side with a free English adaptation, the latter alone being used subsequently, except of course in cases where such a procedure will lead to ambiguity,

e.g., வேங்கடம்=Vengadam (Ve:ngkat:am).

(ii) Reference may be made to *Tamil Culture,* Vol. IV, No. 1 (January 1955 issue) pp. 58-73 for fuller details.

THE TAMIL SCRIPT

(This table is given for the guidance of those who wish to read Tamil texts which often appear in TAMIL CULTURE)

Vowels	Vowel symbols attached to preceding consonant.	Hard consonants						Soft consonants						Medium consonants					
		k	c	t:	th	p	t	ng	nj	n:	nh	m	n	y	r	l	v	l-	l:
அ a	nil	க	ச	ட	த	ப	ற	ங	ஞ	ண	ந	ம	ன	ய	ர	ல	வ	ழ	ள
ஆ a:	ா to the right of the consonant	கா					றா			ணா			னா						
இ i	ி to be *joined* at the top —right of consonant	கி																	
ஈ i:	ீ to be *joined* at the top —right of consonant	கீ																	
உ u	a semi-circle ( ), a vertical stroke | or a loop to be *joined* to the bottom	கு	சு	டு	து	பு	று	ஙு	ஞு	ணு	நு	மு	னு	யு	ரு	லு	வு	ழு	ளு
ஊ u:	Same as for u, but with an additional stroke or loop	கூ	சூ	டூ	தூ	பூ	றூ	ஙூ	ஞூ	ணூ	நூ	மூ	னூ	யூ	ரூ	லூ	வூ	ழூ	ளூ
எ e	ெ to the left of the consonant	கெ																	
ஏ e:	ே to the left of the consonant	கே																	
ஐ ai	ை to the left of the consonant	கை								ணை			னை			லை			ளை
ஒ o	ெ to the left & ா to the right of the consonant	கொ					றொ			ணொ			னொ						
ஓ o:	ே to the left & ா to the right	கோ					றோ			ணோ			னோ						
ஔ au	ெ to the left & ள to the right	கௌ																	
மெய் pure consonants	A dot · on the top of the consonant	க்																	

Note.—(1) The vowels are written as shown in the first vertical column.

(2) The consonants are written as shown in the horizontal columns, with a symbol or symbols indicating the vowel immediately following. A consonant followed by the vowel அ (a) has no symbol, while the pure consonant not followed by a vowel has a dot on top.

(3) All the eighteen vowel consonants under க (k) are shown as a guide; in other cases only the irregular forms are shown, the rest being exactly similar to those shown under க (k), excepting for trivial differences in a few cases which might safely be ignored.